



**Matt Taibbi**

@mtaibbi

## 1. Thread: THE TWITTER FILES

2. What you're about to read is the first installment in a series, based upon thousands of internal documents obtained by sources at Twitter.

3. The "Twitter Files" tell an incredible story from inside one of the world's largest and most influential social media platforms. It is a Frankensteinian tale of a human-built mechanism grown out the control of its designer.

4. Twitter in its conception was a brilliant tool for enabling instant mass communication, making a true real-time global conversation possible for the first time.

5. In an early conception, Twitter more than lived up to its mission statement, giving people "the power to create and share ideas and information instantly, without barriers."

6. As time progressed, however, the company was slowly forced to add those barriers. Some of the first tools for controlling speech were designed to combat the likes of spam and financial fraudsters.

7. Slowly, over time, Twitter staff and executives began to find more and more uses for these tools. Outsiders began petitioning the company to manipulate speech as well: first a little, then more often, then constantly.

8. By 2020, requests from connected actors to delete tweets were routine. One executive would write to another: "More to review from the Biden team." The reply would come back: "Handled."

On Sat, Oct 24, 2020 at 5:39 PM @twitter.com> wrote:

More to review from the Biden team:

<https://twitter.com/jared87983561/status/1320159679700373504>  
<https://twitter.com/let3481/status/1320154175481626624>  
[https://twitter.com/JSJX\\_2/status/1320152593742614529](https://twitter.com/JSJX_2/status/1320152593742614529)  
<https://twitter.com/ozwenya/status/1320151083692388352>  
<https://twitter.com/GuySquiggs/status/1320149308625145856>

Thanks all.

On Sat, Oct 24, 2020 at 8:28 PM @twitter.com> wrote:

handled these.

### 9. Celebrities and unknowns alike could be removed or reviewed at the behest of a political party:

On Sun, Oct 25, 2020 at 9:58 AM @twitter.com> wrote:

I grabbed the first one under SI... defer to Safety on the high profile second one

On Sat, Oct 24, 2020 at 6:54 PM @twitter.com> wrote:

An additional report from DNC.  
[https://twitter.com/stephen\\_liuhuan/status/1320153232006676484](https://twitter.com/stephen_liuhuan/status/1320153232006676484)  
<https://twitter.com/RealJamesWoods/status/1320171179504644098>

### 10. Both parties had access to these tools. For instance, in 2020, requests from both the Trump White House and the Biden campaign were received and honored. However:

11. This system wasn't balanced. It was based on contacts. Because Twitter was and is overwhelmingly staffed by people of one political orientation, there were more channels, more ways to complain, open to the left (well, Democrats) than the right.

<https://www.opensecrets.org/orgs/twitter/summary?id=D000067113>

#### Contributions by Party of Recipient

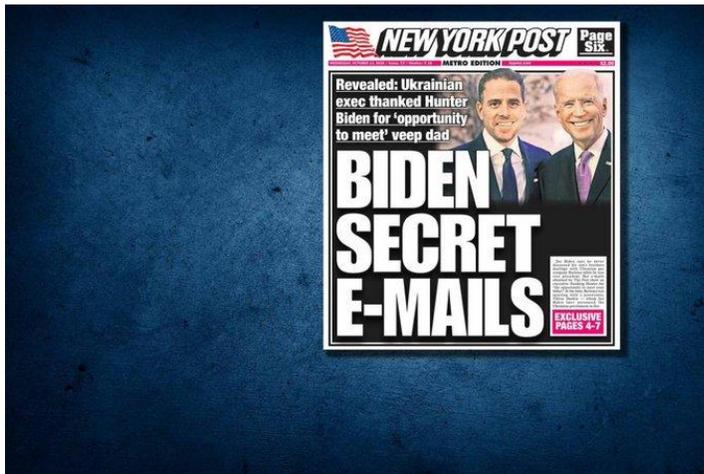
Cycle	Total	Democrats	% to Dems	Republicans	% to Repubs
2022	\$185,267	\$165,969	99.73%	\$451	0.27%
2020	\$968,749	\$909,431	98.47%	\$14,137	1.53%
2018	\$309,394	\$295,722	96.38%	\$11,100	3.62%

12. The resulting slant in content moderation decisions is visible in the documents you're about to read. However, it's also the assessment of multiple current and former high-level executives.

Okay, there was more throat-clearing about the process, but screw it, let's jump forward

16. The Twitter Files, Part One: How and Why Twitter Blocked the Hunter Biden Laptop Story

17. On October 14, 2020, the New York Post published BIDEN SECRET EMAILS, an expose based on the contents of Hunter Biden's abandoned laptop:



18. Twitter took extraordinary steps to suppress the story, removing links and posting warnings that it may be "unsafe." They even blocked its transmission via direct message, a tool hitherto reserved for extreme cases, e.g. child pornography.

19. White House spokeswoman Kayleigh McEnany was locked out of her account for tweeting about the story, prompting a furious letter from Trump campaign staffer Mike Hahn, who seethed: "At least pretend to care for the next 20 days."

From: Mike Hahn <mhahn@donaldtrump.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 14, 2020 at 7:19 PM  
Subject: URGENT: Kayleigh McEnany  
To: cstrom@twitter.com <cstrom@twitter.com>, Lauren Devoll <ldevoll@twitter.com>, Twitter Government & Politics <gov@twitter.com>

Kayleigh McEnany (@KayleighMcEnany) has been locked out from her account for simply talking about the New York Post story.

All she did was cite the story and firsthand reporting that has been reported by other outlets and not disputed by the Biden campaign.

I need an answer immediately on when/how she will be unlocked.

I also don't appreciate how nobody on this team called me regarding the news that you'll be censoring news articles.

Like I said, at least pretend to care for the next 20 days.

20. This led public policy executive Caroline Strom to send out a polite WTF query. Several employees noted that there was tension between the comms/policy teams, who had little/less control over moderation, and the safety/trust teams:

On Thu, Oct 15, 2020 at 7:24 AM Caroline Strom <cstrom@twitter.com> wrote:

Hi team! Are you able to take a closer look here?  
Thank you!

21. Strom's note returned the answer that the laptop story had been removed for violation of the company's "hacked materials" policy:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20190717143909/https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies/hacked-materials>

Hi Caroline,

Thanks for reaching out to us.

Per checking, the user was bounced by Site Integrity for violating our Hacked Materials policy. Adding them here for further insights and guidance.

Thanks,

Elaine Ong Sotto | @elaineongsotto  
Ops Analyst, Global Escalations Team

22. Although several sources recalled hearing about a "general" warning from federal law enforcement that summer about possible foreign hacks, there's no evidence - that I've seen - of any government involvement in the laptop story. In fact, that might have been the problem...

23. The decision was made at the highest levels of the company, but without the knowledge of CEO Jack Dorsey, with former head of legal, policy and trust Vijaya Gadde playing a key role.

24. "They just freelanced it," is how one former employee characterized the decision. "Hacking was the excuse, but within a few hours, pretty much everyone realized that wasn't going to hold. But no one had the guts to reverse it."

25. You can see the confusion in the following lengthy exchange, which ends up including Gadde and former Trust and safety chief Yoel Roth. Comms official Trenton Kennedy writes, "I'm struggling to understand the policy basis for marking this as unsafe":

2020-10-14 [NYPost Hunter Biden Laptop Article](#) - PRIVILEGED AND CONFIDENTIAL  
our teams continue to investigate the origins of the material included in the reporting.

Trenton Kennedy

I'm struggling to understand the policy basis for marking this as unsafe, and I think the best explainability argument for this externally would be that we're waiting to understand if this story is the result of hacked materials. We'll face hard questions on this if we don't have some kind of solid reasoning for marking the link unsafe.

Trenton Kennedy

cc: @yoel@twitter.com @rsommers@twitter.com @iplunkett@twitter.com @krosborough@twitter.com

Katie Rosborough

Will we also mark similar stories as unsafe?

<https://www.foxnews.com/politics/hunter-biden-emails-senate-homeland-security-committee-investigating-hard-drive-laptop>

26. By this point “everyone knew this was fucked,” said one former employee, but the response was essentially to err on the side of... continuing to err.

Yoel Roth

The policy basis is hacked materials - though, as discussed, this is an emerging situation where the facts remain unclear. Given the SEVERE risks here and lessons of 2016, we're erring on the side of including a warning and preventing this content from being amplified.

Vijaya Gadde

What is the warning that will come up?

Yoel Roth

New

When you click the link, you'll see the generic unsafe URL message (references spam, malware, and violations of the Twitter Rules) - not ideal, but it's the only thing we have

Ian Plunkett

New

Whatever we do in the comms (this will become a bias claim for Jack pre-hearing immediately), let's make it clear we're proactively but cautiously interpreting this through the lens of our hacked materials policy and allowing the link with a warning and significant reduction of spread.

27. Former VP of Global Comms Brandon Borrman asks, “Can we truthfully claim that this is part of the policy?”

Brandon Borrman

New

To Ian's point, can we truthfully claim that this is part of the policy? i.e. As part of our approach to addressing potentially hacked materials, we are limiting visibility of related stories on Twitter while our investigation is ongoing.

28. To which former Deputy General Counsel Jim Baker again seems to advise staying the non-course, because “caution is warranted”:

Jim Baker

New

[PRIVILEGED AND CONFIDENTIAL]

I support the conclusion that we need more facts to assess whether the materials were hacked. At this stage, however, it is reasonable for us to assume that they may have been and that caution is warranted. There are some facts that indicate that the materials may have been hacked, while there are others indicating that the computer was either abandoned and/or the owner consented to allow the repair shop to access it for at least some purposes. We simply need more information.

29. A fundamental problem with tech companies and content moderation: many people in charge of speech know/care little about speech, and have to be told the basics by outsiders. To wit:

30. In one humorous exchange on day 1, Democratic congressman Ro Khanna reaches out to Gadde to gently suggest she hop on the phone to talk about the “backlash re speech.” Khanna was the only Democratic official I could find in the files who expressed concern.

On Wed, Oct 14, 2020 at 6:21 PM Ro Khanna <rokhanna1@gmail.com> wrote:

Generating huge backlash on hill re speech. Happy to chat if you're up for it.

Best, Ro

Sent from my iPhone

Gadde replies quickly, immediately diving into the weeds of Twitter policy, unaware Khanna is more worried about the Bill of Rights:

Hi Congressman Khanna,

Thank you for reaching out and we appreciate the heads up. We put out a clarifying thread of Tweets earlier this evening to explain our policy around the posting of private information and linking directly to hacked materials. The press secretary's account was not permanently suspended - we requested that she delete the tweet containing material that is in violation of our rules and her account is restricted until she complies.

I'd be happy to jump on the phone if helpful. My team in DC (Jessica and Lauren) are copied here and also available to discuss.

Thanks,  
Vijaya

---

32. Khanna tries to reroute the conversation to the First Amendment, mention of which is generally hard to find in the files:

Ro Khanna to Vijaya Gadde Ro Khanna [rokhanna1@gmail.com Hope you're well Vijaya! But this seems a violation of the 1st Amendment principles. If there is a hack of classified information or other information that could expose a serious war crime and the NYT was to publish it, I think the NYT should have that right. A journalist should not be held accountable for the illegal actions of the source unless they actively aided the hack. So to restrict the distribution of that material, especially regarding a Presidential candidate, seems not in the keeping of the principles of NYT v Sullivan. I say this as a total Biden partisan and convinced he didn't do anything wrong. But the story now has become more about censorship than relatively innocuous emails and it's become a bigger deal than it would have been.

It also is now leading to serious efforts to curtail section 230 —many of which would have been a mistake.

I believe Twitter itself should curtail what it recommends or puts in trending news, and your policy against QAnon groups is all good. It's a hard balance.

But in the heat of a Presidential campaign, restricting dissemination of newspaper articles (even if NY Post is far right) seems like it will invite more backlash than it will do good.

Please keep this communication between just us and Jack and no need to cc the team or forward to them.

Just wanted to offer my two cents.

33. Within a day, head of Public Policy Lauren Culbertson receives a ghastly letter/report from Carl Szabo of the research firm NetChoice, which had already polled 12 members of congress – 9 Rs and 3 Democrats, from “the House Judiciary Committee to Rep. Judy Chu’s office.”

From: Carl M. Szabo <cszabo@netchoice.org>  
Date: Thu, Oct 15, 2020 at 2:15 PM  
Subject: Recap of Hill Convos About Biden & "Censorship"  
To: Lauren Culbertson <lculbertson@twitter.com>  
Cc: Steve DelBianco <sdelbianco@netchoice.org>, Robert Winterton <RWinterton@netchoice.org>, Chris Marchese <CMarchese@netchoice.org>

Lauren,

Yesterday, NetChoice’s Chris Marchese met informally with 9 Republican and 3 Democratic House staffers to gather intel about FB and Twitter and the NY Post story. The staffers hail from the House Judiciary Committee to Rep. Judy Chu’s office.

34. NetChoice lets Twitter know a “blood bath” awaits in upcoming Hill hearings, with members saying it’s a “tipping point,” complaining tech has “grown so big that they can’t even regulate themselves, so government may need to intervene.”

High level take away - every Republican said “this is a tipping point. It’s just too much.” And both Democrats and the Republicans were angry.

35. Szabo reports to Twitter that some Hill figures are characterizing the laptop story as “tech’s Access Hollywood moment”:

When asked just how bad this situation is, one staffer said: “it’s tech’s Access Hollywood moment and it has no Hillary to hide behind.” Others were more blunt: “tech is screwed and rightfully so.”

36. Twitter files continued:

“THE FIRST AMENDMENT ISN’T ABSOLUTE”

Szabo’s letter contains chilling passages relaying Democratic lawmakers’ attitudes. They want “more” moderation, and as for the Bill of Rights, it’s “not absolute”

The Democrats, meanwhile, complained that the companies are inept: They let conservatives muddy the water and make the Biden campaign look corrupt even though Biden is innocent. They linked this to Hillary Clinton’s email scandal: she did nothing wrong but because the press wouldn’t let the story go, it became a scandal far out of proportion. In their mind, social media is doing the same thing: it doesn’t moderate enough harmful content so when it does, like it did yesterday, it becomes a story. If the companies moderated more, conservatives wouldn’t even think to use social media for disinformation, misinformation, or otherwise.

The Democrats were in agreement: social media needs to moderate more because they’re corrupting democracy and making all “truth” relative. When pushed on how the government might insist on that, consistent with the First Amendment, they demurred: “the First Amendment isn’t absolute.”

An amazing subplot of the Twitter/Hunter Biden laptop affair was how much was done without the knowledge of CEO Jack Dorsey, and how long it took for the situation to get “unfucked” (as one ex-employee put it) even after Dorsey jumped in

There are multiple instances in the files of Dorsey intervening to question suspensions and other moderation actions, for accounts across the political spectrum

The problem with the “hacked materials” ruling, several sources said, was that this normally required an official/law enforcement finding of a hack. But such a finding never appears throughout what one executive describes as a “whirlwind” 24-hour, company-wide mess.

Hi Owls,

As you probably are aware, Twitter actioned Tweets yesterday relating to two NY Post articles that were tweeted out that allegedly included pictures and screenshots of emails from a laptop that allegedly belonged to Hunter Biden, Presidential candidate Joe Biden's son. Our teams made the determination that the materials fall under our Hacked Materials Policy, in addition to sharing personal information, so links were actioned. As you may know, this existing policy framework was launched in 2018 to mitigate real-time harm based on hack and leak scenarios coming out of the 2016 election.

Several high-profile accounts, including press outlets, were impacted by this decision and were actioned. Unfortunately, the language that was provided in the product may have created confusion (indicating the links were spam or unsafe.) Consequently, Twitter Safety explained the reasoning here in a thread.

This morning, the NY Post tweeted additional links to stories that contained pictures and screenshots of emails that we also actioned. The teams determined that a Trump campaign Tweet that previously was actioned for containing PPI would not be re-actioned when it was re-tweeted without the PPI blurred.

I know there are questions that you probably have and are also probably getting a lot of incoming from stakeholders - governmental, academic, civil society, etc. The last 24 hours certainly has been a whirlwind with lots of curves and unknowns and we fully expect that the issues surrounding this matter will continue to swirl in the coming days so thank you to everyone for your patience.

It's been a whirlwind 96 hours for me, too. There is much more to come, including answers to questions about issues like shadow-banning, boosting, follower counts, the fate of various individual accounts, and more. These issues are not limited to the political right.

Good night, everyone. Thanks to all those who picked up the phone in the last few days.

**Bari Weiss**

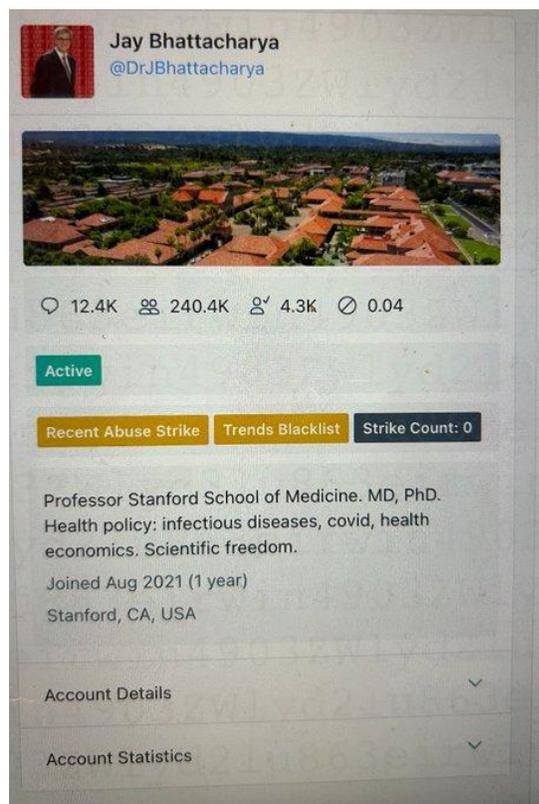
@bariweiss

## THREAD: THE TWITTER FILES PART TWO. TWITTER'S SECRET BLACKLISTS.

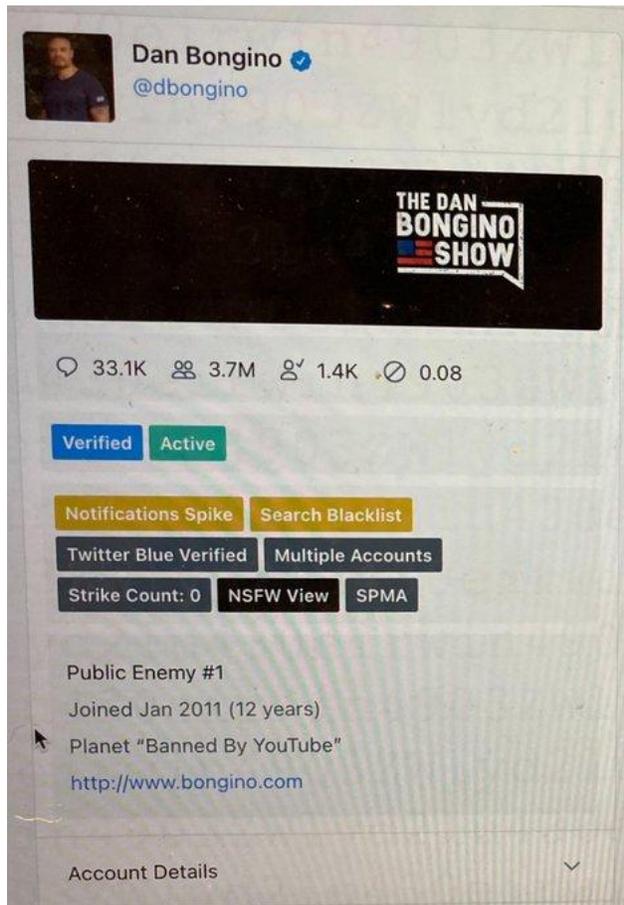
1. A new [#TwitterFiles](#) investigation reveals that teams of Twitter employees build blacklists, prevent disfavored tweets from trending, and actively limit the visibility of entire accounts or even trending topics—all in secret, without informing users.

2. Twitter once had a mission “to give everyone the power to create and share ideas and information instantly, without barriers.” Along the way, barriers nevertheless were erected.

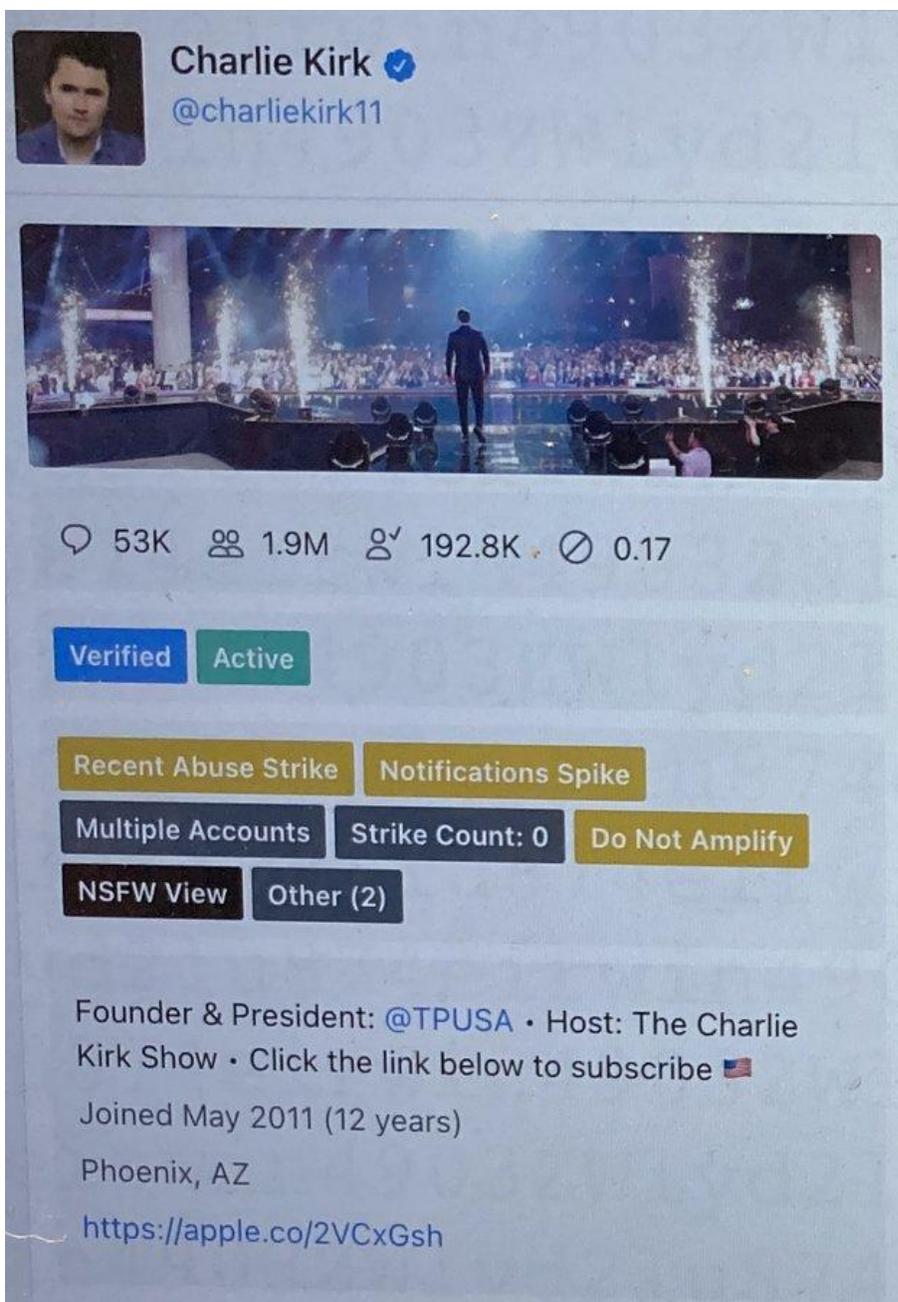
3. Take, for example, Stanford’s Dr. Jay Bhattacharya ([@DrJBhattacharya](#)) who argued that Covid lockdowns would harm children. Twitter secretly placed him on a “Trends Blacklist,” which prevented his tweets from trending.



4. Or consider the popular right-wing talk show host, Dan Bongino (@dbongino), who at one point was slapped with a “Search Blacklist.”



5. Twitter set the account of conservative activist Charlie Kirk (@charliekirk11) to “Do Not Amplify.”



6. Twitter denied that it does such things. In 2018, Twitter's Vijaya Gadde (then Head of Legal Policy and Trust) and Kayvon Beykpour (Head of Product) said: "We do not shadow ban." They added: "And we certainly don't shadow ban based on political viewpoints or ideology."

7. What many people call "shadow banning," Twitter executives and employees call "Visibility Filtering" or "VF." Multiple high-level sources confirmed its meaning.

8. “Think about visibility filtering as being a way for us to suppress what people see to different levels. It’s a very powerful tool,” one senior Twitter employee told us.

9. “VF” refers to Twitter’s control over user visibility. It used VF to block searches of individual users; to limit the scope of a particular tweet’s discoverability; to block select users’ posts from ever appearing on the “trending” page; and from inclusion in hashtag searches.

10. All without users’ knowledge.

11. “We control visibility quite a bit. And we control the amplification of your content quite a bit. And normal people do not know how much we do,” one Twitter engineer told us. Two additional Twitter employees confirmed.

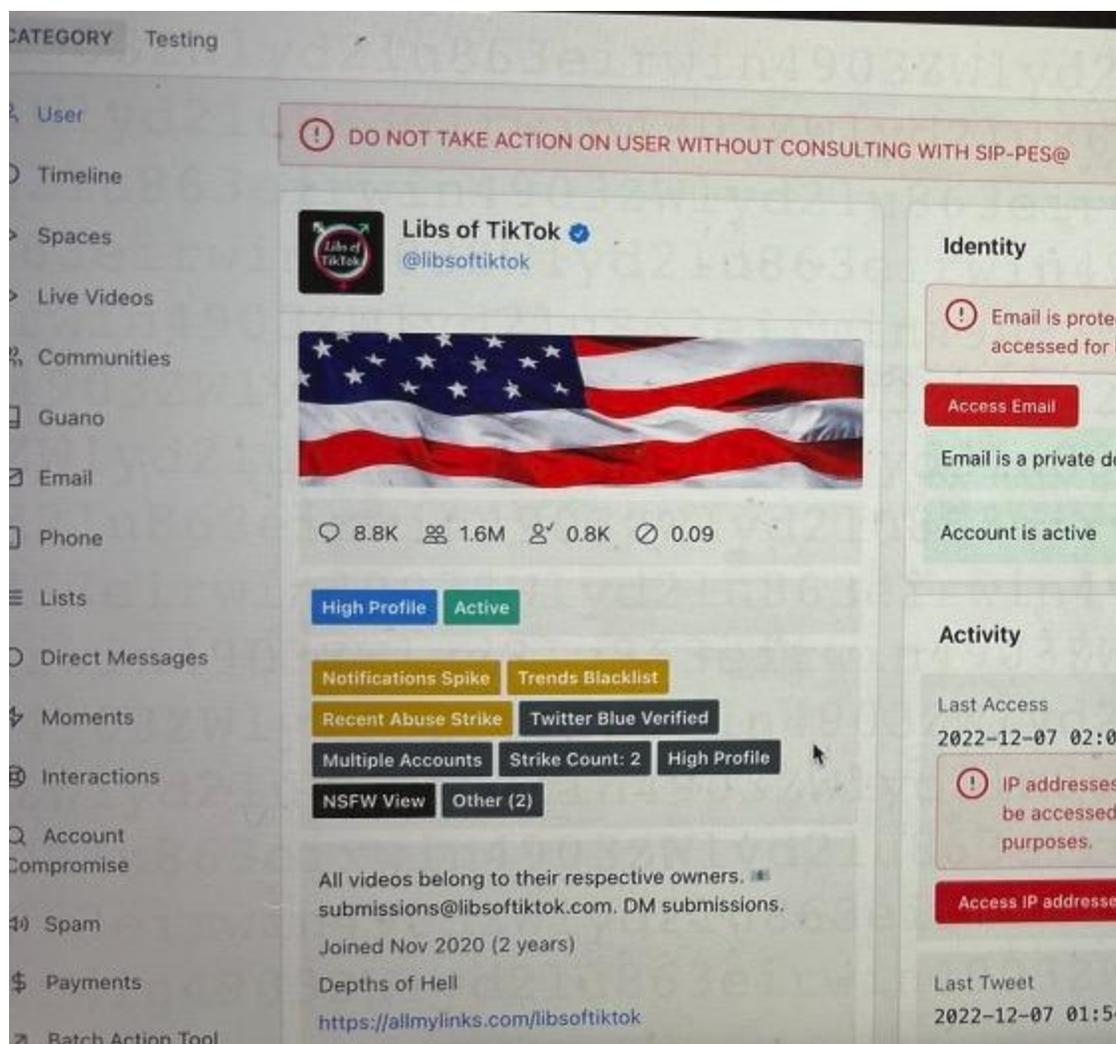
12. The group that decided whether to limit the reach of certain users was the Strategic Response Team - Global Escalation Team, or SRT-GET. It often handled up to 200 “cases” a day.

13. But there existed a level beyond official ticketing, beyond the rank-and-file moderators following the company’s policy on paper. That is the “Site Integrity Policy, Policy Escalation Support,” known as “SIP-PES.”

14. This secret group included Head of Legal, Policy, and Trust (Vijaya Gadde), the Global Head of Trust & Safety (Yoel Roth), subsequent CEOs Jack Dorsey and Parag Agrawal, and others.

15. This is where the biggest, most politically sensitive decisions got made. “Think high follower account, controversial,” another Twitter employee told us. For these “there would be no ticket or anything.”

16. One of the accounts that rose to this level of scrutiny was [@libsoftiktok](#)—an account that was on the “Trends Blacklist” and was designated as “Do Not Take Action on User Without Consulting With SIP-PES.”



17. The account—which Chaya Raichik began in November 2020 and now boasts over 1.4 million followers—was subjected to six suspensions in 2022 alone, Raichik says. Each time, Raichik was blocked from posting for as long as a week.

18. Twitter repeatedly informed Raichik that she had been suspended for violating Twitter’s policy against “hateful conduct.”

19. But in an internal SIP-PES memo from October 2022, after her seventh suspension, the committee acknowledged that “LTT has not directly engaged in behavior violative of the Hateful Conduct policy.” See here:

## Site Policy Recommendation

Site Policy recommends placing @LibsOfTikTok ([LTT] 1.3M followers, not verified) in a 7-day timeout at the account level [meaning, not for a specific Tweet] based on the account's continued pattern of indirectly violating Twitter's Hateful Conduct Policy by tweeting content that either leads to or intends to incite harassment against individuals and institutions that support LGBTQ communities. At this time, Site Policy has not found explicitly violative Tweets, which would result in a permanent suspension of the account.

This type of enforcement action [repeated 7-day timeouts at the account-level] will not lead to permanent suspension, however: should LTT engage in any other direct Tweet-level violations of any of Site Policy's policies, we will move forward with permanent suspension.

## Assessment

Since its most recent timeout, while LTT has not directly engaged in behavior violative of the Hateful Conduct policy, the user has continued targeting individuals/allies/supporters of the LGBTQIA+ community for alleged misconduct. The targeting of at least one of these institutions

20. The committee justified her suspensions internally by claiming her posts encouraged online harassment of "hospitals and medical providers" by insinuating "that gender-affirming healthcare is equivalent to child abuse or grooming."

21. Compare this to what happened when Raichik herself was doxxed on November 21, 2022. A photo of her home with her address was posted in a tweet that has garnered more than 10,000 likes.

22. When Raichik told Twitter that her address had been disseminated she says Twitter Support responded with this message: "We reviewed the reported content, and didn't find it to be in violation of the Twitter rules." No action was taken. The doxxing tweet is still up.

Hello,

Thanks for reaching out. We reviewed the reported content, and didn't find it to be in violation of the [Twitter rules](#). In this case, no action will be taken at this time.

If you have further concerns about intellectual property, your privacy, or your personal safety, the following guidelines can be of assistance:

23. In internal Slack messages, Twitter employees spoke of using technicalities to restrict the visibility of tweets and subjects. Here's Yoel Roth, Twitter's then Global Head of Trust & Safety, in a direct message to a colleague in early 2021:



**Yoel Roth**09:02:09

A lot of times, SI has used technicality spam enforcements as a way to solve a problem created by Safety under-enforcing their policies. Which, again, isn't a problem per se - but it keeps us from addressing the root cause of the issue, which is that our Safety policies need some attention.

24. Six days later, in a direct message with an employee on the Health, Misinformation, Privacy, and Identity research team, Roth requested more research to support expanding “non-removal policy interventions like disabling engagements and deamplification/visibility filtering.”



**Yoel Roth**11:51:36

One of the biggest areas I'd \*love\* research support on is re: non-removal policy interventions like disabling engagements and deamplification/visibility filtering. The hypothesis underlying much of what we've implemented is that if exposure to, e.g., misinformation directly causes harm, we should use remediations that reduce exposure, and limiting the spread/virality of content is a good way to do that (by just reducing prevalence overall). We got Jack on board with implementing this for civic integrity in the near term, but we're going to need to make a more robust case to get this into our repertoire of policy remediations - especially for other policy domains. So I'd love research's POV on that.

25. Roth wrote: “The hypothesis underlying much of what we've implemented is that if exposure to, e.g., misinformation directly causes harm, we should use remediations that reduce exposure, and limiting the spread/virality of content is a good way to do that.”

26. He added: “We got Jack on board with implementing this for civic integrity in the near term, but we're going to need to make a more robust case to get this into our repertoire of policy remediations – especially for other policy domains.”

27. There is more to come on this story, which was reported by [@abigailshrier](#) [@shellenbergermd](#) [@nelliebowles](#) [@isaacgrafstein](#) and the team The Free Press [@thefp](#).

Keep up with this unfolding story here and at our brand new website: [thefp.com](#).

**Matt Taibbi**

@mtaibbi

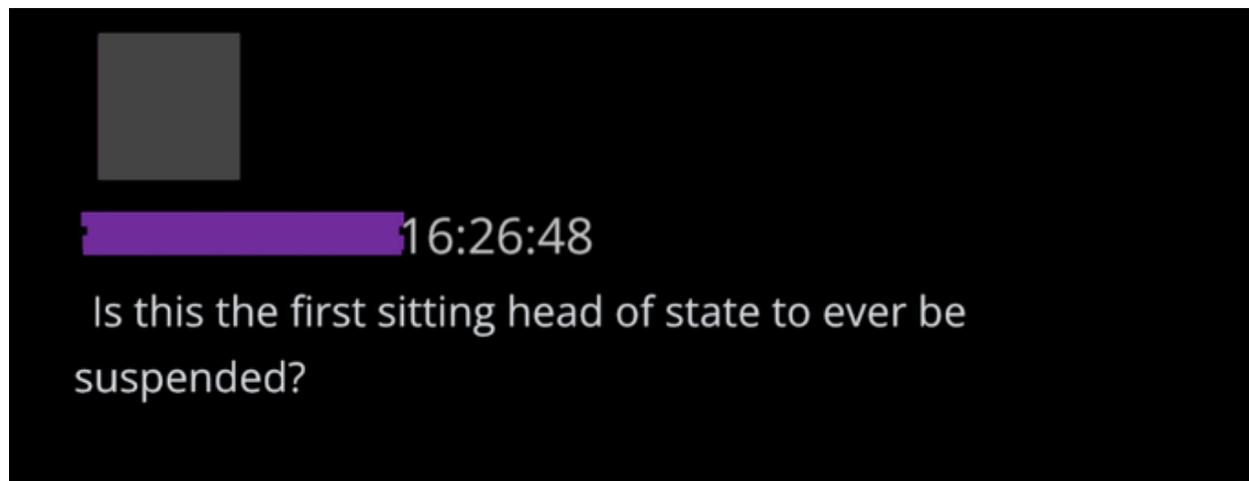
## 1. THREAD: The Twitter Files THE REMOVAL OF DONALD TRUMP Part One: October 2020-January 6th

2. The world knows much of the story of what happened between riots at the Capitol on January 6th, and the removal of President Donald Trump from Twitter on January 8th...

3. We'll show you what hasn't been revealed: the erosion of standards within the company in months before J6, decisions by high-ranking executives to violate their own policies, and more, against the backdrop of ongoing, documented interaction with federal agencies.

4. This first installment covers the period before the election through January 6th. Tomorrow, [@Shellenbergermd](#) will detail the chaos inside Twitter on January 7th. On Sunday, [@BariWeiss](#) will reveal the secret internal communications from the key date of January 8th.

5. Whatever your opinion on the decision to remove Trump that day, the internal communications at Twitter between January 6th-January 8th have clear historical import. Even Twitter's employees understood in the moment it was a landmark moment in the annals of speech.



6. As soon as they finished banning Trump, Twitter execs started processing new power. They prepared to ban future presidents and White Houses – perhaps even Joe Biden. The “new administration,” says one exec, “will not be suspended by Twitter unless absolutely necessary.”



18:13:10

As stated in our <https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies/ban-evasion> | ban evasion policy , if it is clear that another account is being used for the purposes of evading a ban, it is also subject to suspension. For government accounts, such as @POTUS and @WhiteHouse, we will not suspend those accounts but will take action to limit their use. However, these accounts will be transitioned over to the new administration in due course and will not be suspended by Twitter unless absolutely necessary to alleviate real-world harm.

7. Twitter executives removed Trump in part over what one executive called the “context surrounding”: actions by Trump and supporters “over the course of the election and frankly last 4+ years.” In the end, they looked at a broad picture. But that approach can cut both ways.



11:04:11

Hi Vijaya - i'm working with [REDACTED] on my team to put together a doc to share with you with a POV from research (ours, academics with whom we have been working, etc.) on DJT's language as coded incitement to further violence



11:05:57

In the mean time, here is our quick take: the decision on whether to pull that particular tweet or use that as a last straw for trump depends on many factors including: (1) the overall context and narrative in which that tweet lives - we currently analyze tweets and consider them at a tweet-by-tweet basis which does not appropriately take into account the context surrounding - you can use the yelling fire into a crowded theater example - context matters and the narrative that trump and his friends have pursued over the course of this election and frankly last 4+ years must be taken into account when interpreting and analyzing that tweet (2) the larger question is around our moral imperative and decision as a company, which user sentiment should not drive based on #1, [REDACTED] and I believe that his tweet does violate our rules when taking that historical context + current climate into account

8. The bulk of the internal debate leading to Trump's ban took place in those three January days. However, the intellectual framework was laid in the months preceding the Capitol riots.

9. Before J6, Twitter was a unique mix of automated, rules-based enforcement, and more subjective moderation by senior executives. As [@BariWeiss](#) reported, the firm had a vast array of tools for manipulating visibility, most all of which were thrown at Trump (and others) pre-J6.

10. As the election approached, senior executives – perhaps under pressure from federal agencies, with whom they met more as time progressed – increasingly struggled with rules, and began to speak of “vios” as pretexts to do what they'd likely have done anyway.

11. After J6, internal Slacks show Twitter executives getting a kick out of intensified relationships with federal agencies. Here's Trust and Safety head Yoel Roth, lamenting a lack of “generic enough” calendar descriptions to concealing his “very interesting” meeting partners.



**Yoel Roth** 11:36:51

Ehh, it happens. I'm a big believer in calendar transparency. But I reached a certain point where my meetings became... very interesting... to people and there weren't meeting names generic enough to cover. Anyway, let me know.



2:14:21

Very Boring Business Meeting That Is Definitely Not About Trump ;)



**Yoel Roth** 12:14:33

Preeeeeeetty much



**Yoel Roth** 12:14:40

"DEFINITELY NOT meeting with the FBI I SWEAR"



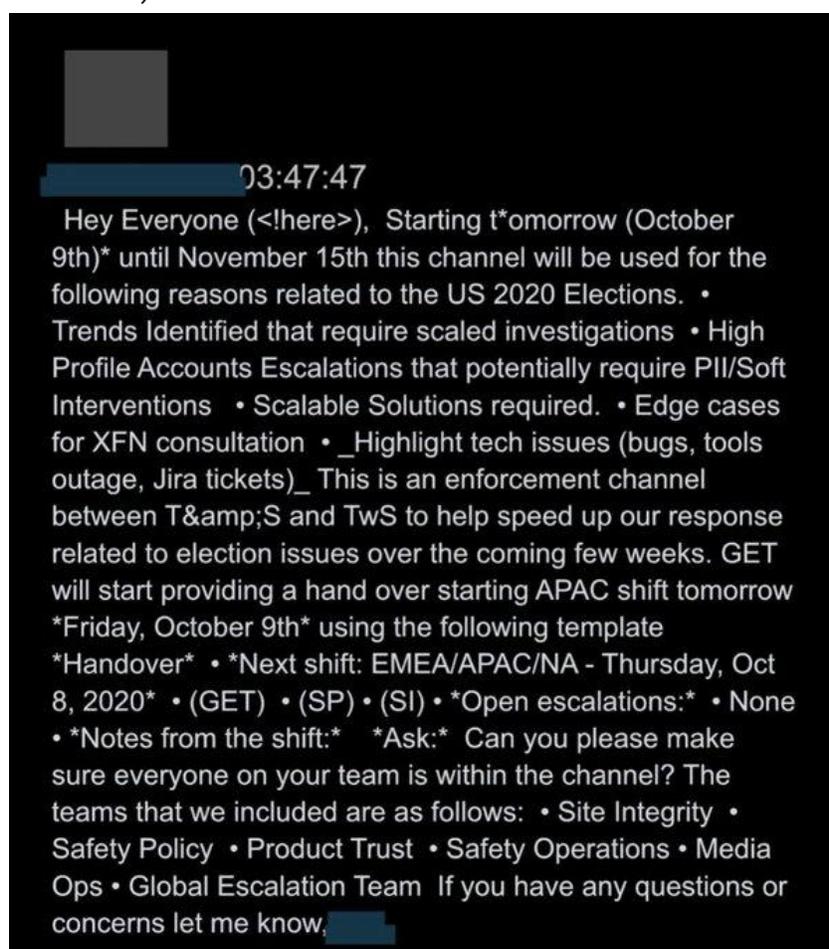
2:14:52

Imao

12. These initial reports are based on searches for docs linked to prominent executives, whose names are already public. They include Roth, former trust and policy chief Vijaya Gadde, and recently plank-walked Deputy General Counsel (and former top FBI lawyer) Jim Baker.

13. One particular slack channel offers an unique window into the evolving thinking of top officials in late 2020 and early 2021.

14. On October 8th, 2020, executives opened a channel called “us2020\_xfn\_enforcement.” Through J6, this would be home for discussions about election-related removals, especially ones that involved “high-profile” accounts (often called “VITs” or “Very Important Tweeters”).



15. There was at least some tension between Safety Operations – a larger department whose staffers used a more rules-based process for addressing issues like porn, scams, and threats – and a smaller, more powerful cadre of senior policy execs like Roth and Gadde.

16. The latter group were a high-speed Supreme Court of moderation, issuing content rulings on the fly, often in minutes and based on guesses, gut calls, even Google searches, even in cases involving the President.

[Redacted] 12:12:03  
hi everyone: received this escalation just now:  
{<https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1314637928883159040?s=19>}

 **Donald J. Trump**   
@realDonaldTrump

**Breaking News: 50,000 OHIO VOTERS getting WRONG ABSENTEE BALLOTS. Out of control. A Rigged Election!!!**

11:44 AM · Oct 9, 2020

43.9K Retweets 6,374 Quote Tweets 198.2K Likes

[Redacted] Friday, October 9th 2020 12.12.50 by [Redacted]  
"a rigged election" would be enough to be in violation right?

 Friday, October 9th 2020 12.12.59 by Yoel Roth  
If the claim of fact were inaccurate, yes.

 Friday, October 9th 2020 12.13.02 by Yoel Roth  
But it looks like that's true -  
{<https://www.npr.org/2020/10/09/922305790/50-000-ohio-voters-to-receive-new-absentee-ballots-after-error-found>}

**50,000 Ohio Voters To Receive New Absentee Ballots After Error Found**  
October 9, 2020 · 2:34 PM ET  
GABE ROSENBERG FROM 



17. During this time, executives were also clearly liaising with federal enforcement and intelligence agencies about moderation of election-related content. While we're still at the start of reviewing the [#TwitterFiles](#), we're finding out more about these interactions every day.

18. Policy Director Nick Pickles is asked if they should say Twitter detects "misinfo" through "ML, human review, and \*\*partnerships with outside experts?\*" The employee asks, "I know that's been a slippery process... not sure if you want our public explanation to hang on that."



14:19:31

npickles are you comfortable with Marketing talking about misinfo by saying that we detect it through ML, human review and \*\*partnerships with outside experts?\*



14:19:57

I know that's been a slippery process, so not sure if you want our public explanation to hang our hat on that



**Nick Pickles** 14:33:08

can we just say "partnerships"



**Nick Pickles** 14:33:34

eg not sure we'd describe the FBI/DHS as experts, or  
some NGOs that aren't academic

19. Pickles quickly asks if they could “just say “partnerships.” After a pause, he says, “e.g. not sure we’d describe the FBI/DHS as experts.”



**Nick Pickles** 14:33:08

can we just say "partnerships"



**Nick Pickles** 14:33:34

eg not sure we'd describe the FBI/DHS as experts, or  
some NGOs that aren't academic

20. This post about the Hunter Biden laptop situation shows that Roth not only met weekly with the FBI and DHS, but with the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (DNI):



### **Bot Application B01AXN4KL0M16:19:26**

yoelr has checked in! Here's what they said. \*What's new for you since our last check-in?\* - Hacked Materials exploded. We blocked the NYP story, then we unblocked it (but said the opposite), then said we unblocked it... and now we're in a messy situation where our policy is in shambles, comms is angry, reporters think we're idiots, and we're refactoring an exceedingly complex policy 18 days out from the election. In short, FML. - Weekly sync with FBI/DHS/DNI re: election security. The meeting happened about 15 minutes after the aforementioned Hacked Materials implosion; the government declined to share anything useful when asked. - Monthly meeting with FBI FITF. Briefed on several ongoing investigations

21. Roth's report to FBI/DHS/DNI is almost farcical in its self-flagellating tone: "We blocked the NYP story, then unblocked it (but said the opposite)... comms is angry, reporters think we're idiots... in short, FML" (fuck my life).



### **Bot Application B01AXN4KL0M16:19:26**

yoelr has checked in! Here's what they said. \*What's new for you since our last check-in?\* - Hacked Materials exploded. We blocked the NYP story, then we unblocked it (but said the opposite), then said we unblocked it... and now we're in a messy situation where our policy is in shambles, comms is angry, reporters think we're idiots, and we're refactoring an exceedingly complex policy 18 days out from the election. In short, FML. - Weekly sync with FBI/DHS/DNI re: election security. The meeting happened about 15 minutes after the aforementioned Hacked Materials implosion; the government declined to share anything useful when asked. - Monthly meeting with FBI FITF. Briefed on several ongoing investigations

23. Some of Roth's later Slacks indicate his weekly confabs with federal law enforcement involved separate meetings. Here, he ghosts the FBI and DHS, respectively, to go first to an "Aspen Institute thing," then take a call with Apple.



**Yoel Roth**08:03:33

Hey there - I have to miss the FBI and DHS meetings today, unfortunately. I saw you're on the invites for both (as are Site Policy). Can you give me a quick readout if there's anything interesting that comes up?



**Patrick Conlon** [redacted] 08:04:00

Sure thing! I hope that everything's OK.



**Yoel Roth**08:04:27

Yeah - just have conflicts at both times. An Aspen Institute thing this morning on vaccines that I have to present at, and then a call with Apple to avoid us getting kicked out of the App Store during the DHS one.



**Patrick Conlon** [redacted] 08:04:58

Ah. Those both seem very important.



**Yoel Roth**08:06:13

Indeed.

24. Here, the FBI sends reports about a pair of tweets, the second of which involves a former Tippecanoe County, Indiana Councilor and Republican named [@JohnBasham](#) claiming "Between 2% and 25% of Ballots by Mail are Being Rejected for Errors."



07:04:23

<!here> we just got a report from the FBI concerning 2 tweets, 1. 1314479095401521154 related to the "shredding" of mail in ballot's, this is proven to be false via this: <https://www.politifact.com/factchecks/2020/oct/08/blog-posting/social-posters-spread-election-misinformation-abou/> do we have a moment ready for this one?

2. 1314328227423420416, I believe was deemed no vio on numerous occasions

The FBI's second report concerned this tweet by [@JohnBasham](#):

 **John Basham**   
@JohnBasham

**EDITORIAL: @TheDemocrats Are In Complete Panic As Their Massive Push For #VoteByMail Is Backfiring On Them!**

Two Things Are Unfolding:

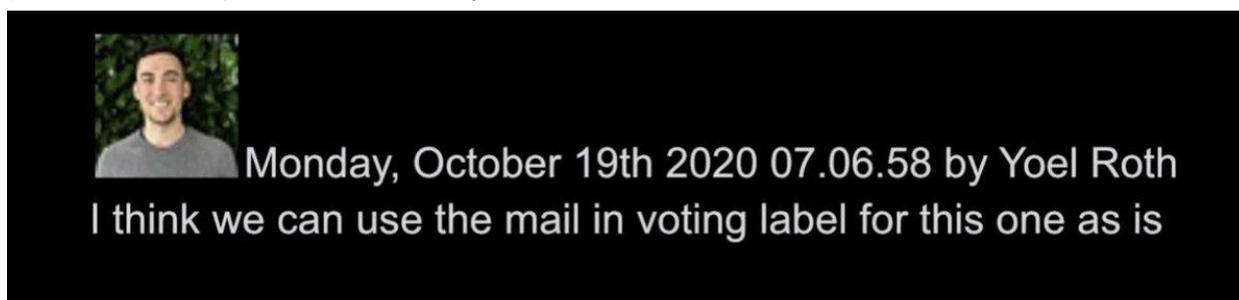
- 1) An Unexpected Number Of Registered **#Republicans** Are Returning Ballots.
- 2) Between 2% & 25% Of Ballots By Mail Are Being **REJECTED** For Errors!



25. The FBI-flagged tweet then got circulated in the enforcement Slack. Twitter cited Politifact to say the first story was “proven to be false,” then noted the second was already deemed “no vio on numerous occasions.”

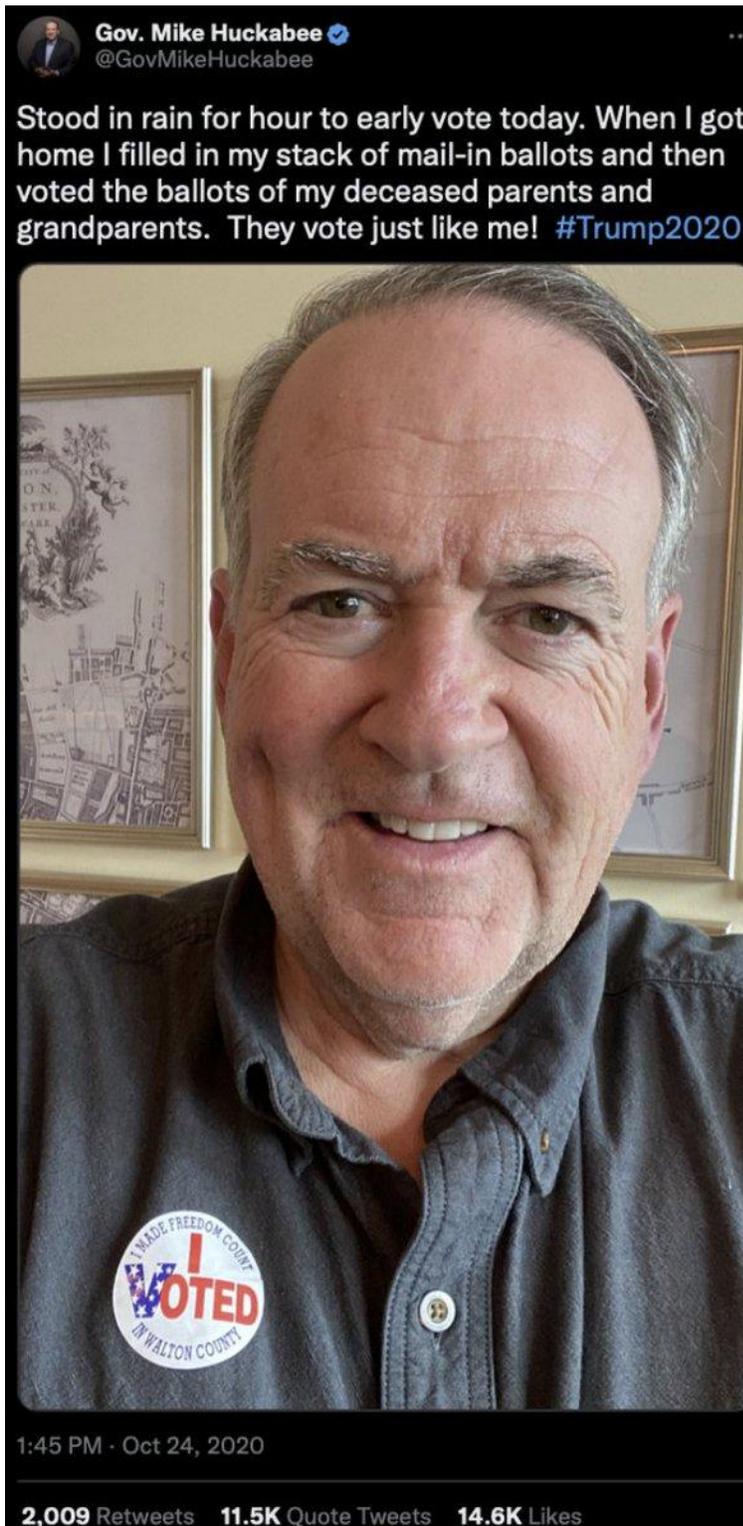


26. The group then decides to apply a “Learn how voting is safe and secure” label because one commenter says, “it’s totally normal to have a 2% error rate.” Roth then gives the final go-ahead to the process initiated by the FBI:



27. Examining the entire election enforcement Slack, we didn’t see one reference to moderation requests from the Trump campaign, the Trump White House, or Republicans generally. We looked. They may exist: we were told they do. However, they were absent here.

31. In one case, former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee joke-tweets about mailing in ballots for his “deceased parents and grandparents.”



32. This inspires a long Slack that reads like an [@TitaniaMcGrath](#) parody. "I agree it's a joke," concedes a Twitter employee, "but he's also literally admitting in a tweet a crime."

The group declares Huck's an "edge case," and though one notes, "we don't make exceptions for jokes or satire," they ultimately decide to leave him be, because "we've poked enough bears."

33. "Could still mislead people... could still mislead people," the humor-averse group declares, before moving on from Huckabee

07:44:11

Hello <here> putting this tweet on everyone's radar. This appears to be a joke but other people might believe it. Can I get your weigh in this?

{<https://twitter.com/GovMikeHuckabee/status/1320104112420212739>}



Sunday, October 25th 2020 08.12.23 by Yoel Roth  
Ugh. Yeah, I saw this one last night. Agree it's a joke... but he's also literally admitting in a tweet to a crime.

Sunday, October 25th 2020 08.15.07 by [redacted]

Could still mislead people. But although misleading, in my opinion, I don't think it can unduly influence the election.  
Could still mislead people



Sunday, October 25th 2020 08.18.56 by Yoel Roth  
Yeah. I could see us taking action under "misleading claims that cause confusion about the established laws, regulations, procedures, and methods of a civic process" — but it's not one that we could really label in a useful way, so it's removal (of a stupid and ill-advised joke) or nothing. I'm maybe inclined not to remove without a report from voting authorities given it's been a while since he tweeted it and virtually all of the replies I'm seeing are critical/counterspeech. pconlon arodericks rsmmers what do you think?

Sunday, October 25th 2020 08.20.07 by [redacted]

I tend to agree... I feel like it's really an edge case, and we've poked enough bears recently...



Sunday, October 25th 2020 08.20.43 by Patrick Conlon

Ooof. I just saw this. Looking at the replies now to get a feel for it much confusion is being generated.



Sunday, October 25th 2020 08.23.16 by Patrick Conlon

A quick glance indicates that people aren't confused, but I have concerns. Under the policy we don't make exceptions for jokes or satire. So while I doubt that Huck was really this stupid and is joking, I'm inclined to say that it should come down.

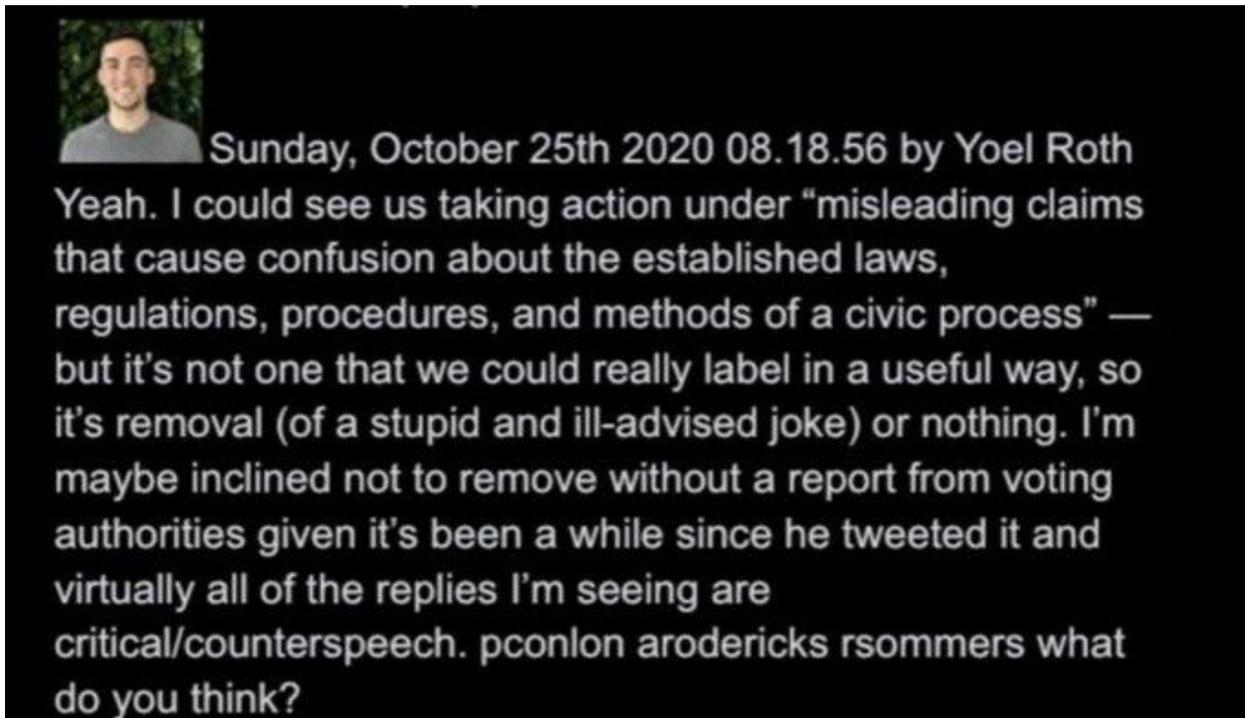
Sunday, October 25th 2020 08.26.45 by [redacted]

I wonder how much of it is an attempt to play the ref prior to the congressional heading. In that the goal is to get 'censored', but yeah, as Patrick says, the policy didn't have that carve out.

Sunday, October 25th 2020 08.27.07 by [redacted]

The thrust of the joke seems to be that mail-in ballots are for the fraudulent votes, so I could see an argument for our mail-in voting label, but absent confusion I'd also be inclined to leave the joke alone.

33. Roth suggests moderation even in this absurd case could depend on whether or not the joke results in “confusion.” This seemingly silly case actually foreshadows serious later issues:



34. In the docs, execs often expand criteria to subjective issues like intent (yes, a video is authentic, but why was it shown?), orientation (was a banned tweet shown to condemn, or support?), or reception (did a joke cause “confusion”?). This reflex will become key in J6.

35. In another example, Twitter employees prepare to slap a “mail-in voting is safe” warning label on a Trump tweet about a postal screwup in Ohio, before realizing “the events took place,” which meant the tweet was “factually accurate”:



6:19:52

<!here> cc: yoelr Trump just posted these two Tweets ://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1315624226737577987> and : \_"Learn how voting by mail is safe and secure" \_ Not sure what the process is for GET, are we expected to do the policy comm's write up for this?{https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/131562431558934536} cc: yoelr Trump just posted these two Tweets <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1315624226737577987> and <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1315624311558934536> that are candidates for labelling: \_"Learn how voting by mail is safe and secure"\_ Not sure what the process is for GET, are we expected to do the policy comm's write up for this?

Monday, October 12th 2020 06.28.36 by [redacted]

cc [redacted] until Yoel wakes up

Monday, October 12th 2020 06.34.06 by [redacted]

I've been on PTO, so not 100% up to speed. My understanding in both cases is that the events took place, and that the commentary by POTUS is his opinion related to these real events so that there wouldn't be any labelling action/violation on our side.



Monday, October 12th 2020 07.01.35 by Yoel Roth  
Yeah... those are factually accurate...

Monday, October 12th 2020 07.06.27 by [redacted]

Thanks for clarifying

36. "VERY WELL DONE ON SPEED" Trump was being "visibility filtered" as late as a week before the election. Here, senior execs didn't appear to have a particular violation, but still worked fast to make sure a fairly anodyne Trump tweet couldn't be "replied to, shared, or liked":



 **Donald J. Trump**   
@realDonaldTrump

Some or all of the content shared in this Tweet is disputed and might be misleading about an election or other civic process. [Learn more](#)

**Big problems and discrepancies with Mail In Ballots all over the USA. Must have final total on November 3rd.**

 **Stay informed**   
Learn how voting by mail is safe and secure [Find out more](#)

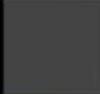
This Tweet can't be replied to, shared or liked.

4:43 PM · Oct 26, 2020

replies to thread:



Monday, October 26th 2020 16.57.17 by Yoel Roth  
What's the team's recommendation?



Monday, October 26th 2020 16.57.25 by [redacted]

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rgrmMLGyAXYKIRAvKgsuvHPcHaKAPXVZsTFO6g3X8\\_Y/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rgrmMLGyAXYKIRAvKgsuvHPcHaKAPXVZsTFO6g3X8_Y/edit)



Monday, October 26th 2020 16.58.53 by Yoel Roth  
Thank you. Agree with the recommendation. Flagging right now with leadership given it's POTUS



Monday, October 26th 2020 16.59.05 by [redacted]

will set up a call



Monday, October 26th 2020 16.59.05 by Yoel Roth  
Can we use a new doc per PII review?



Monday, October 26th 2020 16.59.20 by [redacted]

ah, okay. (will also include that in our playbook after!)



Monday, October 26th 2020 17.00.26 by [redacted]

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zDEXeAvqDZn5aAfBCnU26YZhBYtqAZLGquU1AnioQi8/edit?usp=sharing>



Monday, October 26th 2020 17.00.38 by Yoel Roth  
EDI approved

"VERY WELL DONE ON SPEED": the group is pleased the Trump tweet is dealt with quickly



Monday, October 26th 2020 17.00.54 by Yoel Roth

Let's inform stakeholders and move forward



Monday, October 26th 2020 17.01.15 by [redacted]

did you still wanna do a call?



Monday, October 26th 2020 17.01.21 by Yoel Roth

N, can skip pagerduty too



Monday, October 26th 2020 17.01.27 by Yoel Roth

Happened to already be talking to everyone involved.



Monday, October 26th 2020 17.03.03 by Yoel Roth

Going to apply the EDI now



Monday, October 26th 2020 17.03.12 by Yoel Roth

Is there a thread already w comms etc?



Monday, October 26th 2020 17.03.45 by [redacted]

drafting it up now



Monday, October 26th 2020 17.11.38 by [redacted]

email sent



Monday, October 26th 2020 17.15.51 by [redacted]

Very well done on speed folks, what this is all designed for and a huge positive for the platform

37. A seemingly innocuous follow-up involved a tweet from actor [@realJamesWoods](#), whose ubiquitous presence in argued-over Twitter data sets is already a [#TwitterFiles](#) in-joke.



Twitter is suppressing this tweet by the President. Here's a screen grab.



22:00 - 26 Oct 2020

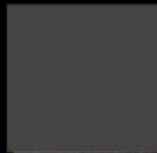
38. After Woods angrily quote-tweeted about Trump's warning label, Twitter staff – in a preview of what ended up happening after J6 – despaired of a reason for action, but resolved to “hit him hard on future vio.”



Tuesday, October 27th 2020 01.28.00 by [redacted]



Considering the pv2 bug outs this weekend re: James Woods being so over the strike limit that our tools won't work on him, I'd suggest we action him for something worth the fiasco rather this screenshot, since we don't have a firm policy basis for action on his account.



Tuesday, October 27th 2020 01.44.12 by [redacted]



yep. are you fine letting this one lie [redacted] can hit him hard on future vio with firmer basis

39. Here a label is applied to Georgia Republican congresswoman Jody Hice for saying, "Say NO to big tech censorship!" and, "Mailed ballots are more prone to fraud than in-person balloting... It's just common sense."



The image shows a screenshot of a tweet from Rep. Jody Hice (@CongressmanHice). The tweet text is: ".@Twitter doesn't want you to see this tweet by @TomFitton, the head of @JudicialWatch. Read & share it! Say NO to Big Tech censorship! Mailed ballots are more prone to fraud than in-person voting. That shouldn't be controversial. It's just common sense." A label box is overlaid on the bottom of the tweet, containing the text: "Stay informed Learn how voting by mail is safe and secure Find out more".

**Rep. Jody Hice**   
@CongressmanHice

.@Twitter doesn't want you to see this tweet by @TomFitton, the head of @JudicialWatch.

Read & share it!

Say NO to Big Tech censorship!

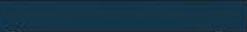
Mailed ballots are more prone to fraud than in-person voting. That shouldn't be controversial. It's just common sense.

**Stay informed**   
Learn how voting by mail is safe and secure [Find out more](#)

40. Twitter teams went easy on Hice, only applying “soft intervention,” with Roth worrying about a “wah wah censorship” optics backlash:

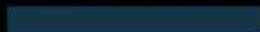
 Monday, October 26th 2020 12.32.14 by   
  
devils advocate: The quoted tweet still shows up with the EDI and the actual content Rep Hice says is lower level ("more fraud with mail in ballots than in person" is much more of a legitimate statement even if scale is still minuscule"). I think I'd lean towards just putting a MIB soft intervention on this rather than the full EDI

 Monday, October 26th 2020 12.32.29 by Yoel Roth  
Agree.

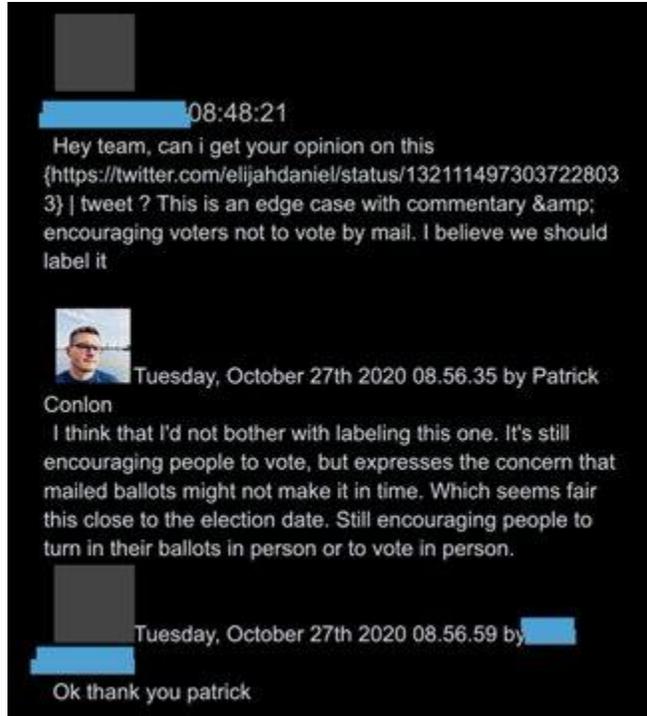
 Monday, October 26th 2020 12.32.38 by Patrick Conlon   
Yep, I was just typing that haha

 Monday, October 26th 2020 12.32.42 by Yoel Roth  
I think going too far down the rabbit hole of labeling critical speech (i.e. critical of our handling of this case) is dangerous

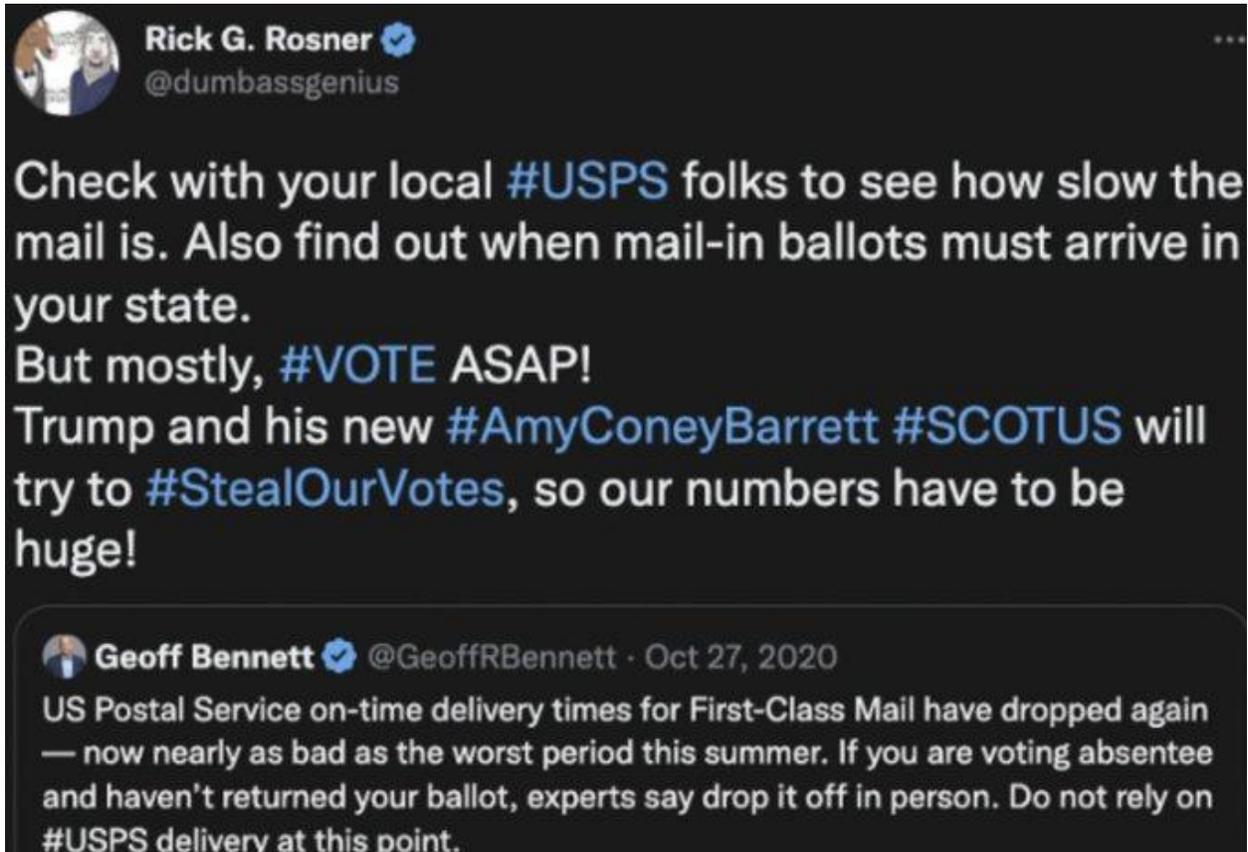
 Monday, October 26th 2020 12.32.49 by Yoel Roth  
It becomes a self-reinforcing “wah wah censorship” cycle

 Monday, October 26th 2020 12.33.34 by Patrick Conlon   
I'm currently responding to Judicial Watch's whining to Public Policy. I regret nothing, but am happy to iterate what rules they violated.

41. Meanwhile, there are multiple instances of involving pro-Biden tweets warning Trump “may try to steal the election” that got surfaced, only to be approved by senior executives. This one, they decide, just “expresses concern that mailed ballots might not make it on time.”



42. "THAT'S UNDERSTANDABLE": Even the hashtag [#StealOurVotes](#) – referencing a theory that a combo of Amy Coney Barrett and Trump will steal the election – is approved by Twitter brass, because it's "understandable" and a "reference to... a US Supreme Court decision."





08:56:19

Hi Team! can i get a second opinion for this  
{<https://twitter.com/dumbassgenius/status/1321116137266933763>{tweet} please? I am leaning towards labeling it.



Tuesday, October 27th 2020 08:57.13 by Yoel

Roth

Not seeing the violation here?



Tuesday, October 27th 2020 08:57.43 by Patrick

Conlon

I wouldn't label. I think that it's encouraging people to vote, but to be realistic that a mailed ballot might not make it in time.



Tuesday, October 27th 2020 08:58.46 by

perfect thanks yoelr and pconlon I was wondering about this part \_\*\*"Trump and his new #AmyConeyBarrett #SCOTUS will try to #StealOurVotes,"\*\_



Tuesday, October 27th 2020 08:58.48 by

all good



Tuesday, October 27th 2020 09:00.26 by Patrick

Conlon

Ah, that's understandable. believe that it's a reference to the a US Supreme Court decision on processing mail-in ballots that arrive after Election Day.



Tuesday, October 27th 2020 09:00.47 by

Thanks pconlon

43. In this exchange, again unintentionally humorous, former Attorney General Eric Holder claimed the U.S. Postal Service was “deliberately crippled,” ostensibly by the Trump administration. He was initially hit with a generic warning label, but it was quickly taken off by Roth:



44. Later in November 2020, Roth asked if staff had a “debunk moment” on the “SCYTL/Smartmatic vote-counting” stories, which his DHS contacts told him were a combination of “about 47” conspiracy theories:



**Yoel Roth** 16:54:36

Hi there - me again - do we have a debunk moment on the SCYTL/Smartmatic vote counting conspiracies?

...



**Wednesday, November 18th 2020**

**17.15.12 by Yoel Roth**

DHS referred to it on a call today (sadly not public) as “a combination of about 47 different conspiracy theories” so hopefully there’s stuff out there.

45. On December 10th, as Trump was in the middle of firing off 25 tweets saying things like, "A coup is taking place in front of our eyes," Twitter executives announced a new "L3 deamplification" tool. This step meant a warning label now could also come with deamplification:



**Patrick Conlon** [REDACTED] 20:54:47

[Update] Hello everyone, I wanted to give you an update on some of our enforcement options for Tweets containing the civic misinfo that we've seen. It's been decided that Tweets that we've manually reviewed and determined need a label will now be subject to L3 deamplification, further restricting the extent to which that Tweet can be shared. The current batch of Entity IDs will soon be used for automated labeling work, but I've created a new batch of Entity IDs for the labels that we've been using the most during the past couple of weeks. Labels that we've only rarely used or that have been deprecated already haven't gotten an L3 update. If there's a moment when we need the L3 version for one of those labels, please flag it to Matt Graydon (mgraydon) or myself. To find the new L3 Entity IDs, please look at the 'L3 - US 2020 - 11 December Update' tab in the Civic Integrity Entity IDs - strato spreadsheet.

46. Some executives wanted to use the new deamplification tool to silently limit Trump's reach more right away, beginning with the following tweet:

 **Donald J. Trump**   
@realDonaldTrump



**Markets**  
DJI 29973

**STIMULUS STALEMATE CONTINUES AS WE AWAIT FDA COVID VACCINE APPROVAL**

2:53 558.3K views RES RATINGS VICTORY OVER FOX NEWS CHANNEL . . . FED TAX INQUIRY INTO HL

**Trump got 11 million more votes | Jim Jordan**  
Via American Agenda, weekdays at 2 PM ET on Newsmax TV.

From **NEWSMAX** 

 **Stay informed** 

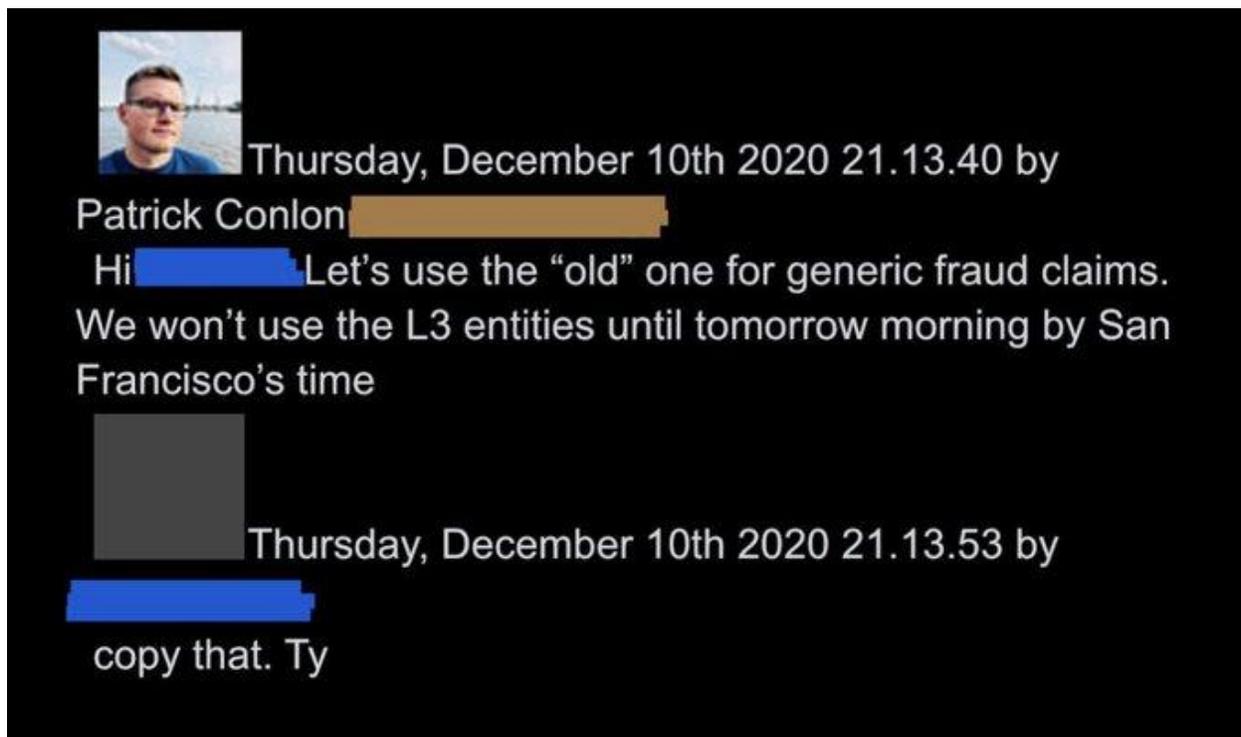
This claim about election fraud is disputed [Find out more](#)

11:41 PM · Dec 10, 2020

---

**8,276** Retweets **1,234** Quote Tweets **46.3K** Likes

47. However, in the end, the team had to use older, less aggressive labeling tools at least for that day, until the “L3 entities” went live the following morning.



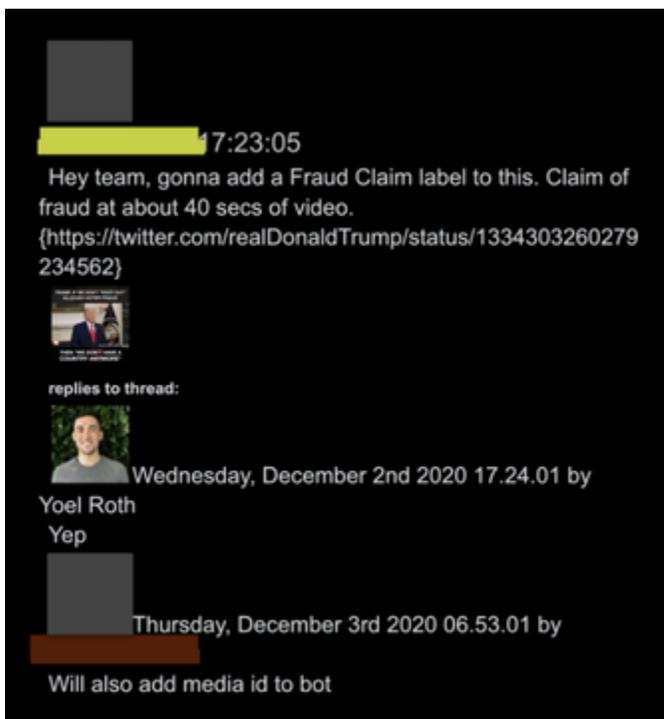
48. The significance is that it shows that Twitter, in 2020 at least, was deploying a vast range of visible and invisible tools to rein in Trump's engagement, long before J6. The ban will come after other avenues are exhausted

49. In Twitter docs execs frequently refer to “bots,” e.g. “let’s put a bot on that.” A bot is just any automated heuristic moderation rule. It can be anything: every time a person in Brazil uses “green” and “blob” in the same sentence, action might be taken.



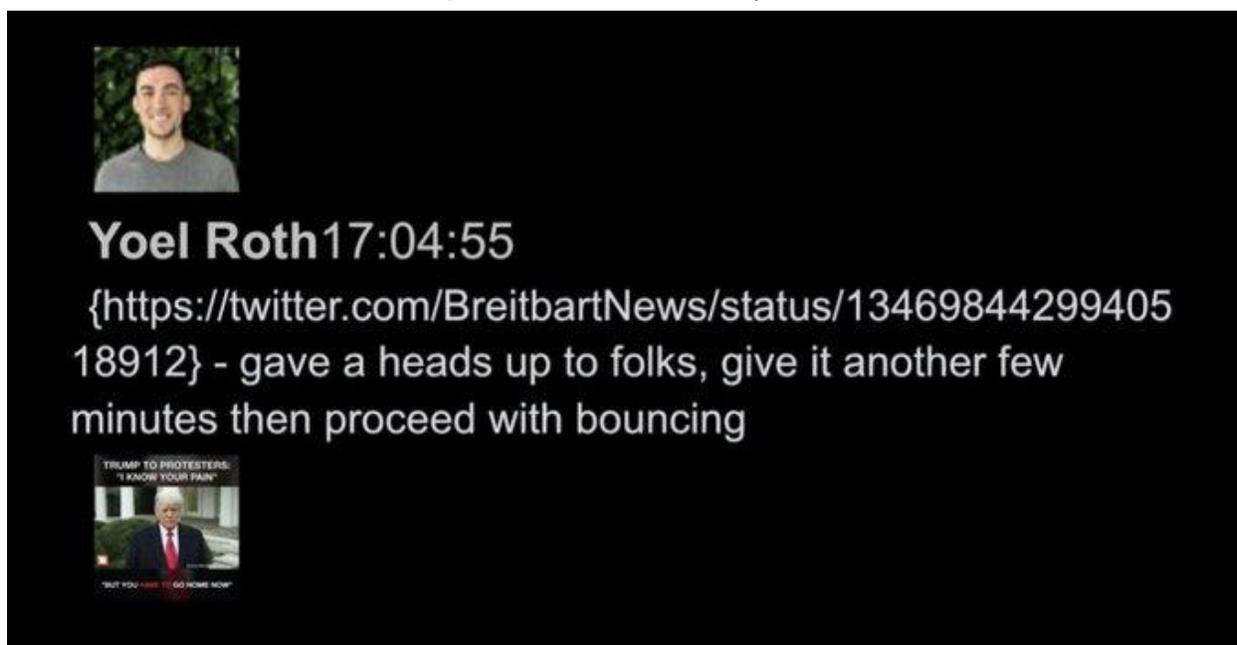
**Bot Application B01DM9U1NSZ10:00:01**

50. In this instance, it appears moderators added a bot for a Trump claim made on Breitbart. The bot ends up becoming an automated tool invisibly watching both Trump and, apparently, Breitbart (“will add media ID to bot”). Trump by J6 was quickly covered in bots.



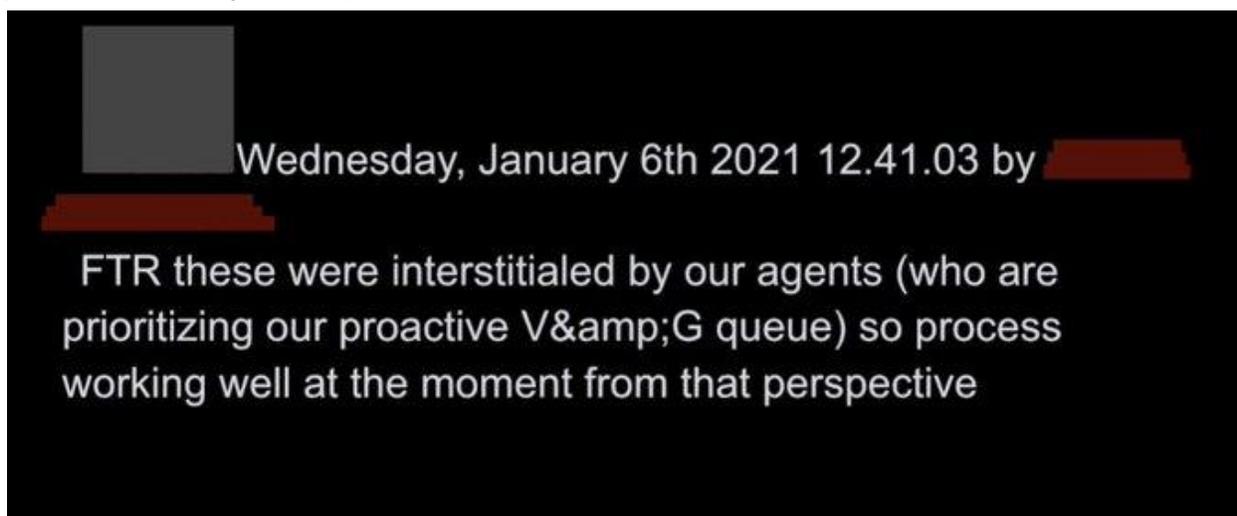
51. There is no way to follow the frenzied exchanges among Twitter personnel from between January 6th and 8th without knowing the basics of the company's vast lexicon of acronyms and Orwellian unwords.

52. To “bounce” an account is to put it in timeout, usually for a 12-hour review/cool-off:



53. “Interstitial,” one of many nouns used as a verb in Twitterspeak (“denylist” is another), means placing a physical label atop a tweet, so it can’t be seen.

54. PII has multiple meanings, one being “Public Interest Interstitial,” i.e. a covering label applied for “public interest” reasons. The post below also references “proactive V,” i.e. proactive visibility filtering.



55. This is all necessary background to J6. Before the riots, the company was engaged in an inherently insane/impossible project, trying to create an ever-expanding, ostensibly rational set of rules to regulate every conceivable speech situation that might arise between humans.

This project was preposterous yet its leaders were unable to see this, having become infected with groupthink, coming to believe – sincerely – that it was Twitter's responsibility to control, as much as possible, what people could talk about, how often, and with whom

57. The firm's executives on day 1 of the January 6th crisis at least tried to pay lip service to its dizzying array of rules. By day 2, they began wavering. By day 3, a million rules were reduced to one: what we say, goes

Pinned Tweet



**Michael Shellenberger**

@ShellenbergerMD

## 1. TWITTER FILES, PART 4 The Removal of Donald Trump: January 7 As the pressure builds, Twitter executives build the case for a permanent ban

On Jan 7, senior Twitter execs:

- create justifications to ban Trump
- seek a change of policy for Trump alone, distinct from other political leaders
- express no concern for the free speech or democracy implications of a ban

This [#TwitterFiles](#) is reported with [@lwoodhouse](#)

For those catching up, please see: Part 1, where [@mtaibbi](#) documents how senior Twitter executives violated their own policies to prevent the spread of accurate information about Hunter Biden's laptop;



**Matt Taibbi**

@mtaibbi - Dec 2

1. Thread: THE TWITTER FILES [Show this thread](#)

Part 2, where [@bariweiss](#) shows how senior Twitter execs created secret blacklists to “de-amplify” disfavored Twitter users, not just specific tweets;

Quote Tweet



**Bari Weiss**

@bariweiss · Dec 8

THREAD: THE TWITTER FILES PART TWO. TWITTER’S SECRET BLACKLISTS. [Show this thread](#)

And Part 3, where [@mtaibbi](#) documents how senior Twitter execs censored tweets by Trump in the run-up to the Nov 2020 election while regularly engaging with representatives of U.S. government law enforcement agencies.

Quote Tweet



**Matt Taibbi**

@mtaibbi · Dec 9

1. THREAD: The Twitter Files THE REMOVAL OF DONALD TRUMP Part One: October 2020-January 6th [Show this thread](#)

For years, Twitter had resisted calls to ban Trump.

“Blocking a world leader from Twitter,” it wrote in 2018, “would hide important info... [and] hamper necessary discussion around their words and actions.”



**Twitter Public Policy**

@Policy · Jan 5, 2018



Dorsey was on vacation in French Polynesia the week of January 4-8, 2021. He phoned into meetings but also delegated much of the handling of the situation to senior execs [@yoyoel](#), Twitter's Global Head of Trust and Safety, and [@vijaya](#) Head of Legal, Policy, & Trust.

As context, it's important to understand that Twitter's staff & senior execs were overwhelmingly progressive.

In 2018, 2020, and 2022, 96%, 98%, & 99% of Twitter staff's political donations went to Democrats.



### Matt Taibbi

@mtaibbi · Dec 2

11. This system wasn't balanced. It was based on contacts. Because Twitter was and is overwhelmingly staffed by people of one political orientation, there were more channels, more ways to complain, open to the left (well, Democrats) than the right.

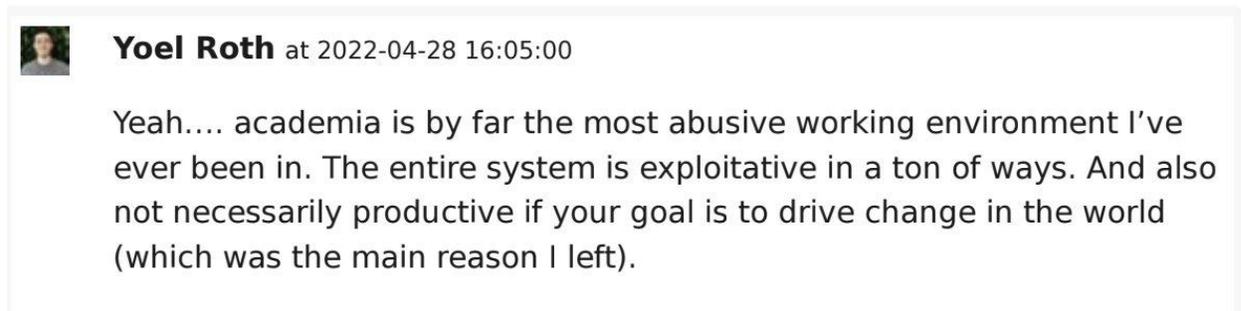
<https://www.opensecrets.org/orgs/twitter/s...> [Show this thread](#)

### Contributions by Party of Recipient

Cycle	Total	Democrats	% to Dems	Republicans	% to Repubs
2022	\$185,267	\$165,969	99.73%	\$451	0.27%
2020	\$968,749	\$909,431	98.47%	\$14,137	1.53%
2018	\$309,394	\$295,722	96.38%	\$11,100	3.62%

In 2017, Roth tweeted that there were "ACTUAL NAZIS IN THE WHITE HOUSE."

In April 2022, Roth told a colleague that his goal “is to drive change in the world,” which is why he decided not to become an academic.



On January 7, @Jack emails employees saying Twitter needs to remain consistent in its policies, including the right of users to return to Twitter after a temporary suspension

After, Roth reassures an employee that "people who care about this... aren't happy with where we are"



**Yoel Roth** 19:09:57

Jack's emails have been fine... but ultimately, I think people want to hear from Vijaya, or Del, or someone closer to the specifics of this who can reassure them that people who care about this are thinking deeply about these problems and aren't happy with where we are. A few engineers have reached out to me directly about it, and I'm chatting with them... but it's so clear they just want to know that someone is doing something about this, and it's not that we're ignoring the issues here.



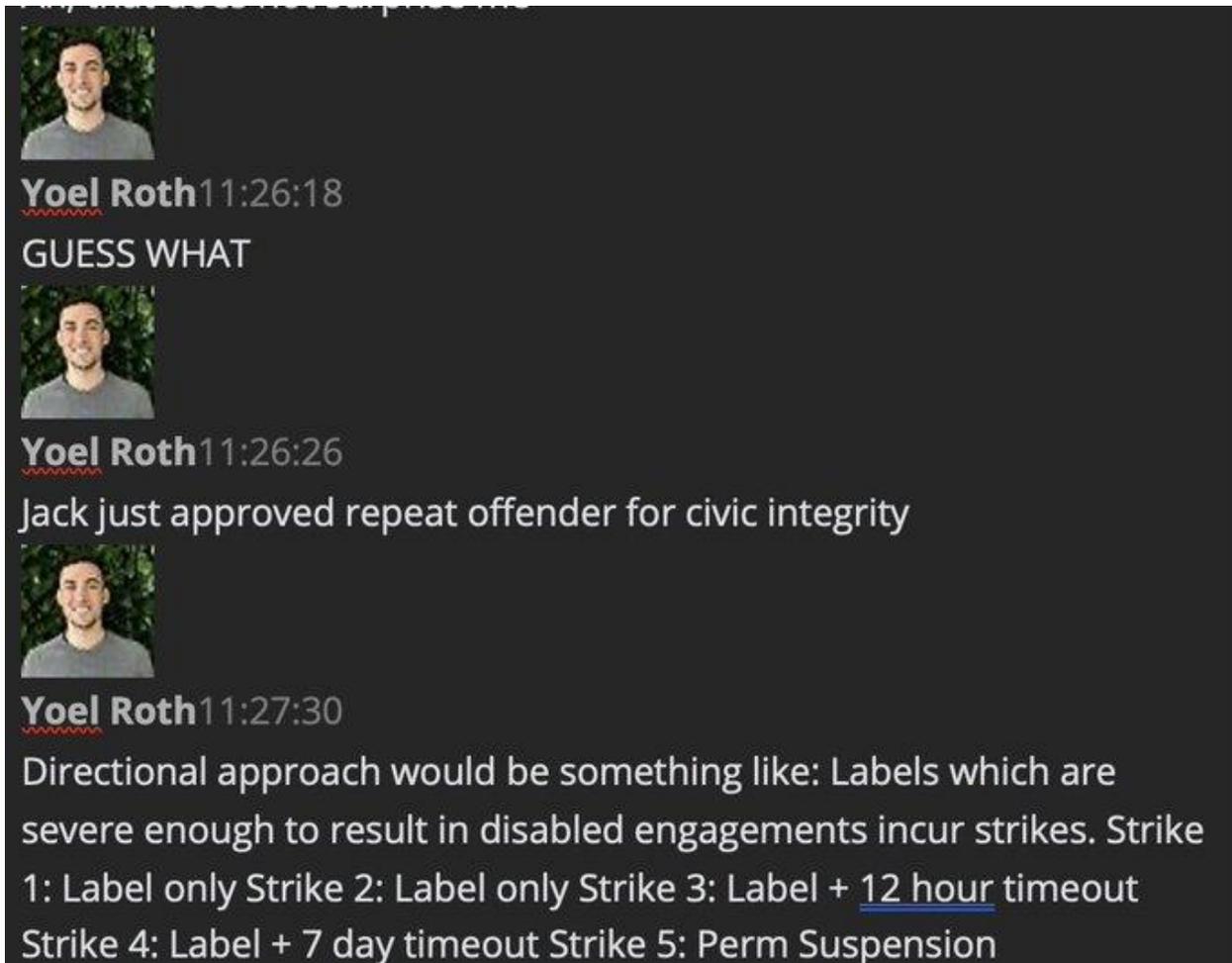
19:14:27

I think there's also an opportunity to help people understand that, while it seems obvious and simple that we "should" permaban his personal account, we can't afford to take that immediate action without first "playing the movie out" and anticipating all the other things that can happen, and then figure out the plans for those possible scenarios (e.g., if we suspend the personal account and he posts the same thing on the official government account, do we suspend that too?). People can be forgiven for not thinking beyond the thing that's immediately in front of them, but Jack/Vijaya/Del/you don't have the luxury of just pulling the trigger without thinking things through. We tell them repeatedly that 'people are on it' and 'people are working on it' and they're scratching their heads wondering, how hard can it be to decide if this single account is in violation?

Around 11:30 am PT, Roth DMs his colleagues with news that he is excited to share.

“GUESS WHAT,” he writes. “Jack just approved repeat offender for civic integrity.”

The new approach would create a system where five violations (“strikes”) would result in permanent suspension.

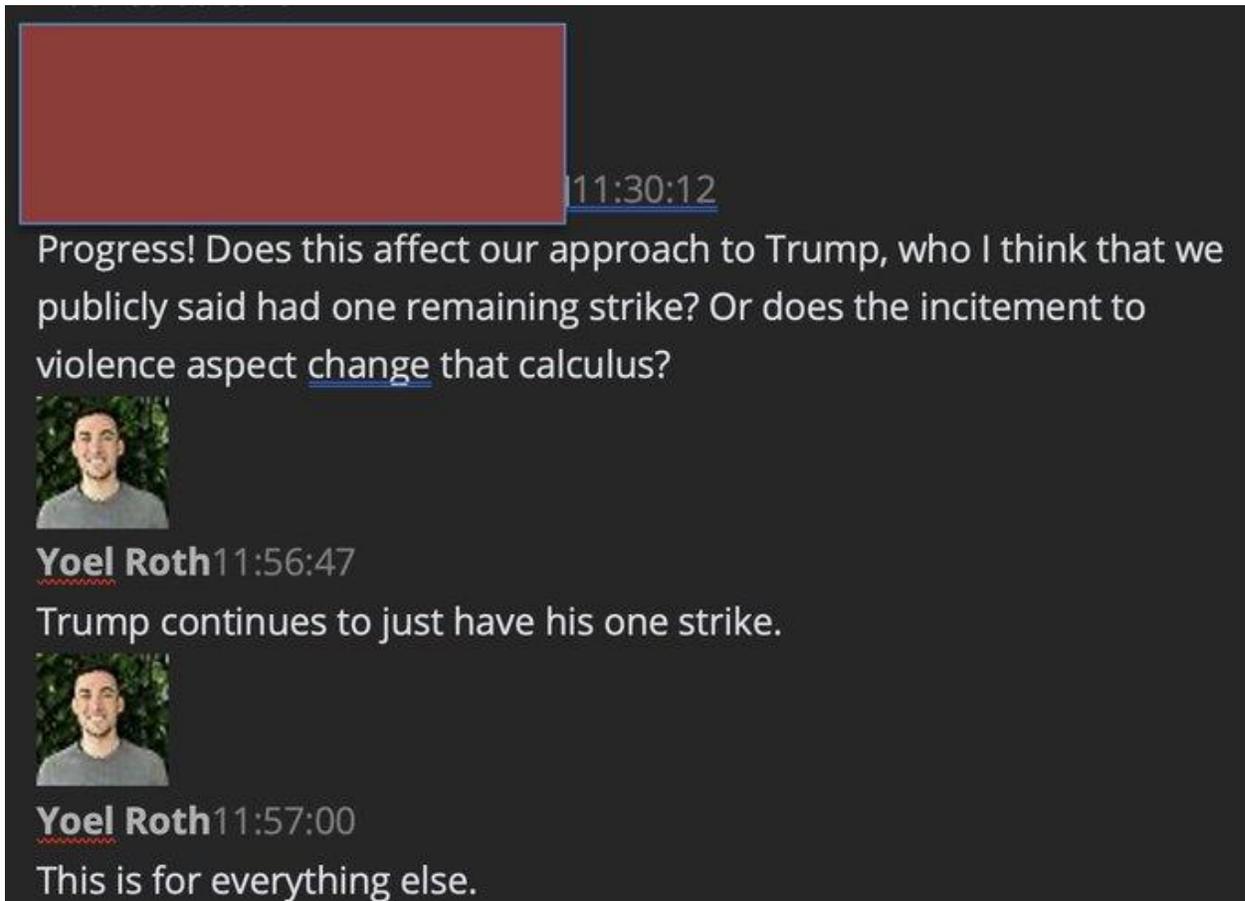


“Progress!” exclaims a member of Roth’s Trust and Safety Team.

The exchange between Roth and his colleagues makes clear that they had been pushing @jack for greater restrictions on the speech Twitter allows around elections.

The colleague wants to know if the decision means Trump can finally be banned. The person asks, "does the incitement to violence aspect change that calculus?"

Roth says it doesn't. "Trump continues to just have his one strike" (remaining).



Roth's colleague's query about "incitement to violence" heavily foreshadows what will happen the following day.

On January 8, Twitter announces a permanent ban on Trump due to the "risk of further incitement of violence."

# Permanent suspension of @realDonaldTrump

By [Twitter Inc.](#)

Friday, 8 January 2021    

After close review of recent Tweets from the @realDonaldTrump account and the context around them — specifically how they are being received and interpreted on and off Twitter — we have permanently suspended the account due to the risk of further incitement of violence.

On J8, Twitter says its ban is based on "specifically how [Trump's tweets] are being received & interpreted."

But in 2019, Twitter said it did "not attempt to determine all potential interpretations of the content or its intent."

[https://blog.twitter.com/en\\_us/topics/company/2019/worldleaders2019](https://blog.twitter.com/en_us/topics/company/2019/worldleaders2019)

(See link)

After close review of recent Tweets from the @realDonaldTrump account and the context around them — specifically how they are being received and interpreted on and off Twitter — we have permanently suspended the account due to the risk of further incitement of violence.

We focus on the language of reported Tweets and do not attempt to determine all potential interpretations of the content or its intent.

The \*only\* serious concern we found expressed within Twitter over the implications for free speech and democracy of banning Trump came from a junior person in the organization. It was tucked away in a lower-level Slack channel known as "site-integrity-auto."

08:11:57

This might be an unpopular opinion but one off ad hoc decisions like this that don't appear rooted in policy are imho a slippery slope and reflect an alternatively equally dictatorial problem. This now appears to be a fiat by an online platform CEO with a global presence that can gatekeep speech for the entire world - which seems unsustainable.

"This might be an unpopular opinion but one off ad hoc decisions like this that don't appear rooted in policy are imho a slippery slope... This now appears to be a fiat by an online platform CEO with a global presence that can gatekeep speech for the entire world..."

08:11:57

This might be an unpopular opinion but one off ad hoc decisions like this that don't appear rooted in policy are imho a slippery slope and reflect an alternatively equally dictatorial problem. This now appears to be a fiat by an online platform CEO with a global presence that can gatekeep speech for the entire world - which seems unsustainable.

Twitter employees use the term "one off" frequently in their Slack discussions. Its frequent use reveals significant employee discretion over when and whether to apply warning labels on tweets and "strikes" on users. Here are typical examples.

Friday, November 6th 2020 08.38.11 by [redacted]  
there's always AbuseOne-Off

Friday, November 6th 2020 08.38.33 by [redacted]  
Bounce. (One-off) is the option

could have Bounced with a strike. I don't see any scenario where we would decide not the bounce here. Just want to check if there are any concerns, otherwise, I can bounce under RTP and close this one before I go. \*FYIs\* \*Account for review: @USAsession\* - We are trying to understand the one-off decision here. A few

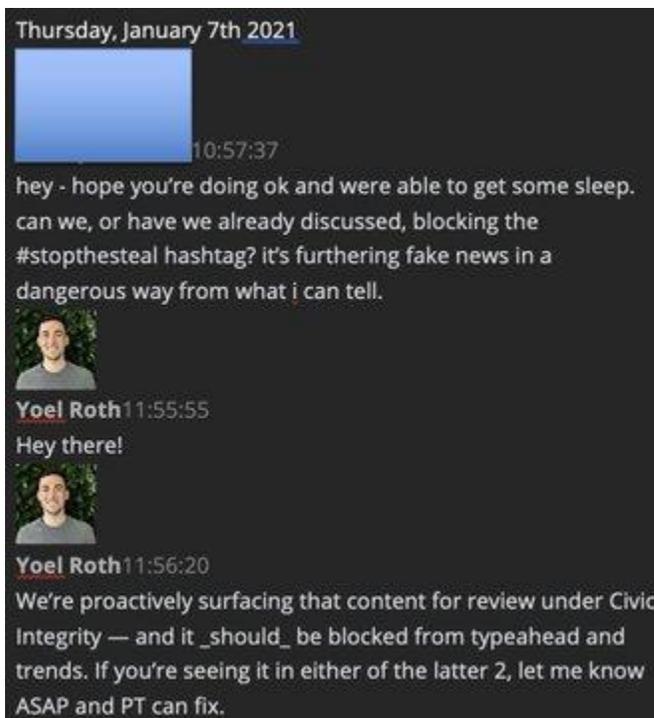
Recall from #TwitterFiles2 by @bariweiss that, according to Twitter staff, "We control visibility quite a bit. And we control the amplification of your content quite a bit. And normal people do not know how much we do."

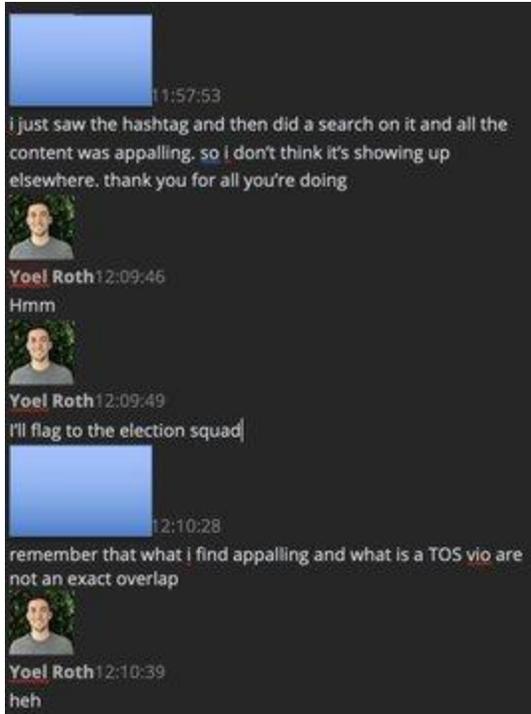
## Bari Weiss

@bariweiss · Dec 8

11. “We control visibility quite a bit. And we control the amplification of your content quite a bit. And normal people do not know how much we do,” one Twitter engineer told us. Two additional Twitter employees confirmed. [Show this thread](#)

Twitter employees recognize the difference between their own politics & Twitter's Terms of Service (TOS), but they also engage in complex interpretations of content in order to stamp out prohibited tweets, as a series of exchanges over the "[#stopthesteal](#)" hashtag reveal.





Roth immediately DMs a colleague to ask that they add "stopthesteal" & [QAnon conspiracy term] "kraken" to a blacklist of terms to be deamplified.

Roth's colleague objects that blacklisting "stopthesteal" risks "deamplifying counterspeech" that validates the election.



**Yoel Roth** 12:11:06

know there's a lot going on - any objections to adding "stopthesteal" and "kraken" to the CHA Q term lists if they aren't there already?



**Yoel Roth** 12:11:18

The daylight separating Q and the Stop The Steal stuff now is effectively zero.



12:11:52

kraken for sure if it's not already there



12:12:11

i'm too worried about the risk of deamplifying counterspeech with stopthesteal



**Yoel Roth** 12:12:20

ack

Indeed, notes Roth's colleague, "a quick search of top stop the steal tweets and they're counterspeech"

But they quickly come up with a solution: "deamplify accounts with stopthesteal in the name/profile" since "those are not affiliated with counterspeech"



12:12:42

yeah just a quick search of top stop the steal tweets and they're  
counterspeech



12:13:36

kraken i'm comfortable with - top tweets are generally Q related and im  
noticing an absence of counterspeech



**Yoel Roth** 12:13:48

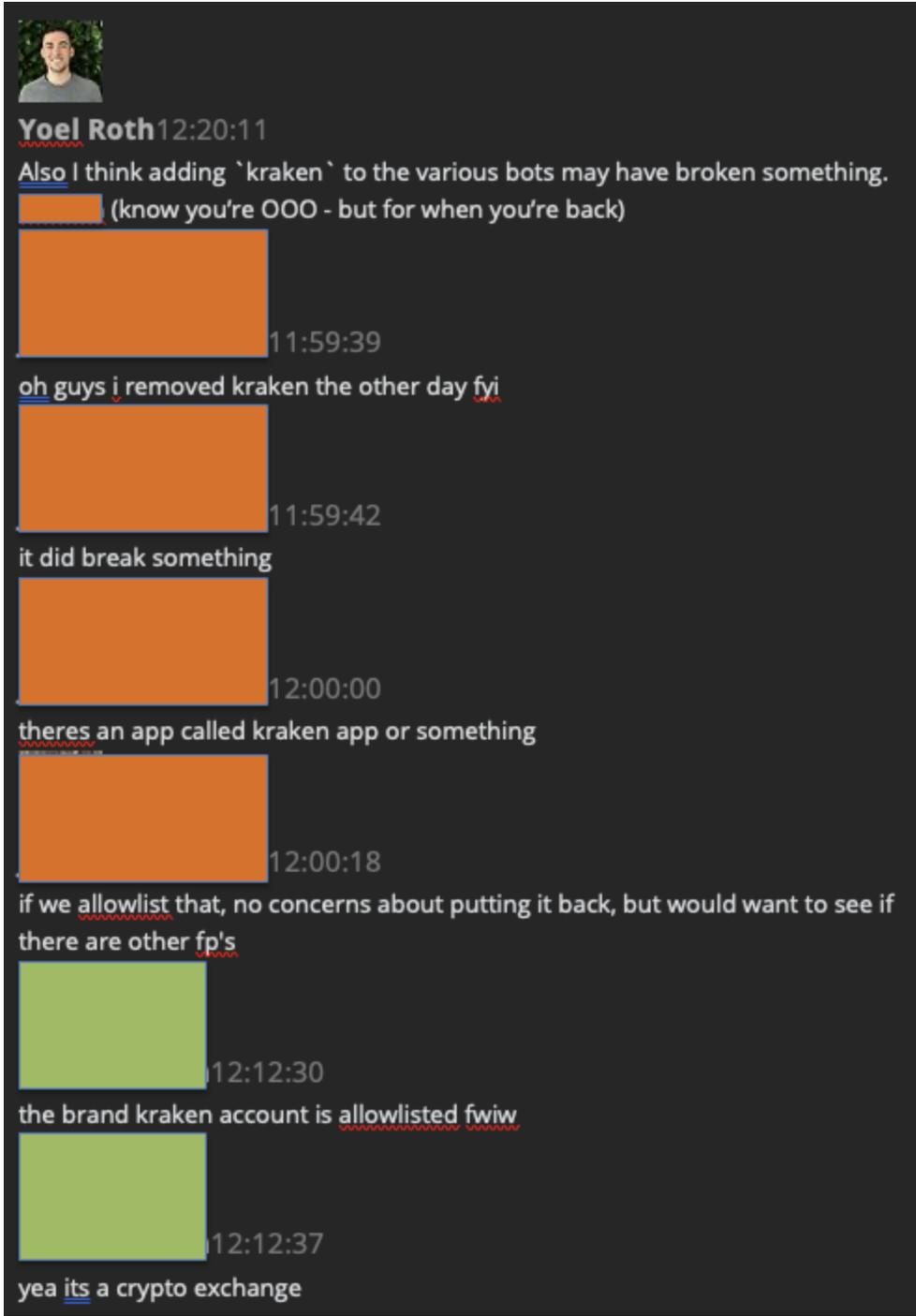
It's also super common on profiles



12:14:26

actually can we deamplify accounts with stopthesteal in the name/profile level  
- those are not affiliated with counterspeech

But it turns out that even blacklisting "kraken" is less straightforward than they thought. That's because kraken, in addition to being a QAnon conspiracy theory based on the mythical Norwegian sea monster, is also the name of a cryptocurrency exchange, and was thus "allowlisted"



Employees struggle with whether to punish users who share screenshots of Trump's deleted J6 tweets

"we should bounce these tweets with a strike given the screen shot violates the policy"

"they are criticising Trump, so I am bit hesitant with applying strike to this user"

[redacted] at 02:50:55 am  
asks, "Hi team! Should we bounce people sharing Trump actioned {<https://twitter.com/fennixyu/status/1346956457455931397?s=21>} | tweets as one-off? Thanks

 **Fenni** 850 gems for hu tao !!!  
@Fennixyu Folgen

fuck off oh my god even twitter says it's inciting violence

 @realDonaldTrump

These are the things and events that happen when a sacred landslide election victory is so unceremoniously & viciously stripped away from great patriots who have been badly & unfairly treated for so long. Go home with love & in peace. Remember this day forever!

 This claim of election fraud is disputed, and this Tweet can't be replied to, Retweeted, or liked due to a risk of violence

15:06 - 6. Jan. 2021

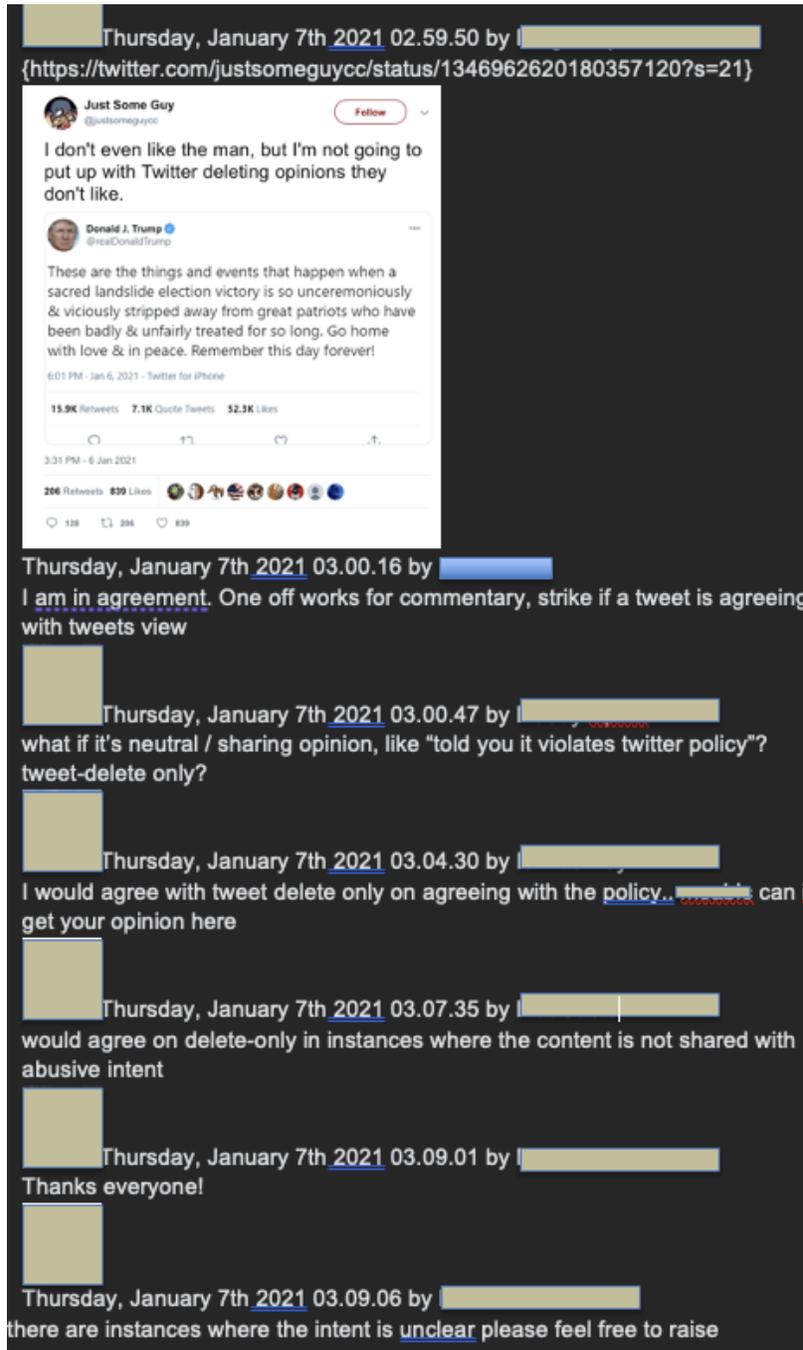
replies to thread:

 Thursday, January 7th 2021 02.52.16 by [redacted]  
[redacted] we should bounce these tweets with a strike given the screen shot violates the policy

 Thursday, January 7th 2021 02.58.27 [redacted]  
[redacted] they are commenting and criticising Trump, so I am bit hesitant with applying strike to this user.

What if a user dislikes Trump \*and\* objects to Twitter's censorship? The tweet still gets deleted. But since the \*intention\* is not to deny the election result, no punishing strike is applied.

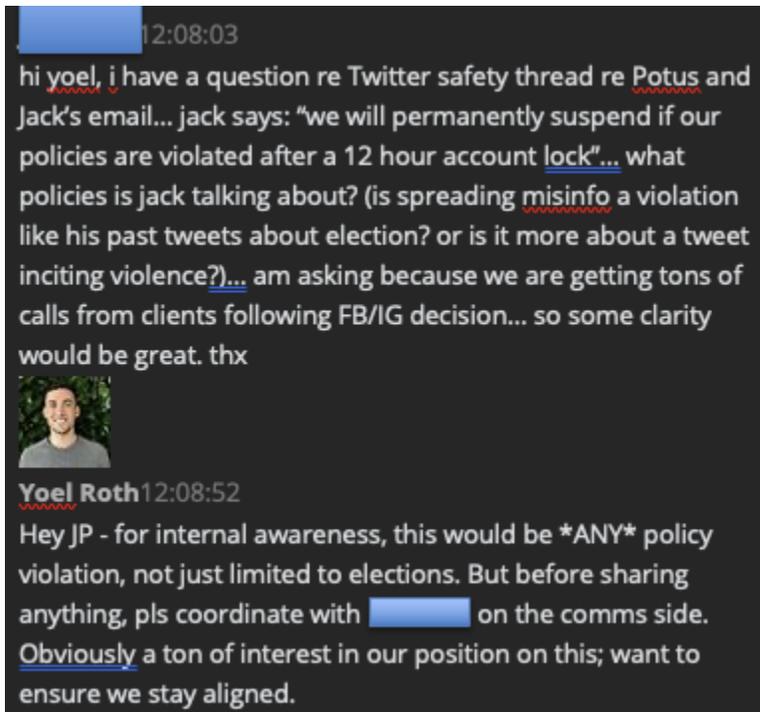
"if there are instances where the intent is unclear please feel free to raise"



Around noon, a confused senior executive in advertising sales sends a DM to Roth.

Sales exec: "jack says: 'we will permanently suspend [Trump] if our policies are violated after a 12 hour account lock'... what policies is jack talking about?"

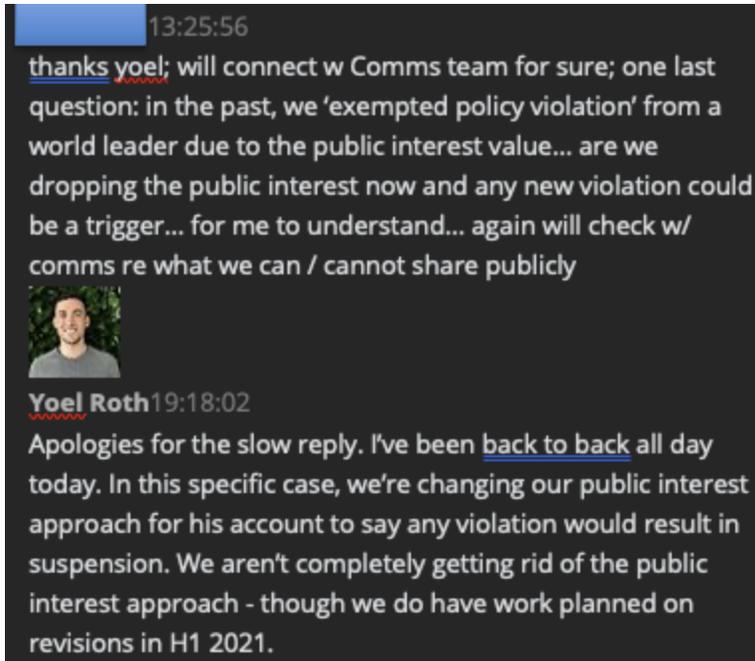
Roth: "\*ANY\* policy violation"



What happens next is essential to understanding how Twitter justified banning Trump.

Sales exec: "are we dropping the public interest [policy] now..."

Roth, six hours later: "In this specific case, we're changing our public interest approach for his account..."



The ad exec is referring to Twitter's policy of "Public-interest exceptions," which allows the content of elected officials, even if it violates Twitter rules, "if it directly contributes to understanding or discussion of a matter of public concern"

<https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies/public-interest>

At present, we limit exceptions to one critical type of public-interest content—Tweets from elected and government officials—given the significant public interest in knowing and being able to discuss their actions and statements.

Roth pushes for a permanent suspension of Rep. Matt Gaetz even though it "doesn't quite fit anywhere (duh)"

It's a kind of test case for the rationale for banning Trump.

"I'm trying to talk [Twitter's] safety [team] into... removal as a conspiracy that incites violence."

12:27:24

What's latest on Antifa claims? Anything brewing policy-wise? C is yelling from the other room that we should just ban Gaetz



**Yoel Roth**12:27:36

Yeah - SP and SI are working on that



**Yoel Roth**12:28:20

It doesn't quite fit anywhere (duh)



12:28:26

Right



**Yoel Roth**12:28:28

But I'm trying to talk safety into treating it as incitement



**Yoel Roth**12:29:28

I think we'll get over the line for removal as a conspiracy that incites violence



**Yoel Roth**12:29:35

Vijaya was directionally okay with it

Around 2:30, comms execs DM Roth to say they don't want to make a big deal of the QAnon ban to the media because they fear "if we push this it looks we're trying to offer up something in place of the thing everyone wants," meaning a Trump ban.



14:26:16

We're good either way. We'll discuss, but I'm generally in the space of let's start taking action and not do a big comms push around this. We can explain why if we're asked, but worry if we push this it looks we're trying to offer up something in place of the thing everyone wants.



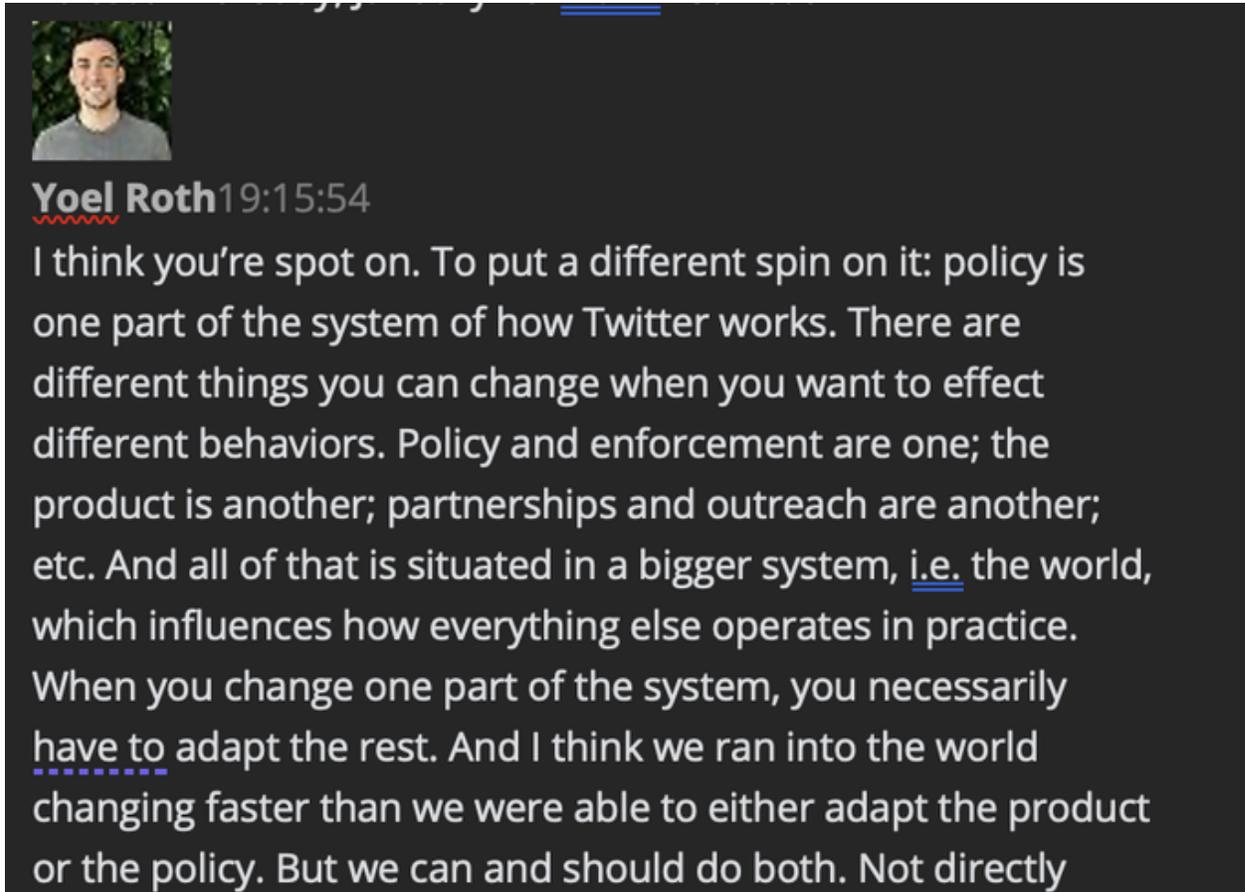
**Yoel Roth** 14:26:25

Yep.

That evening, a Twitter engineer DMs to Roth to say, "I feel a lot of debates around exceptions stem from the fact that Trump's account is not technically different from anybody else' and yet treated differently due to his personal status, without corresponding \_Twitter rules\_."

Hi Yoel, I'm  
sure you are very busy right now, and my apologies if this is  
distraction to your work. I wonder if there has been discussion  
about reshaping the rules around "official accounts" (e.g.  
{<https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump>}) and other accounts  
(e.g. <<https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump>> or an unverified  
account)? I feel a lot of debates around exceptions stem from  
the fact that Trump's account is not technically different from  
anybody else' and yet treated differently due to his personal  
status, without corresponding \_Twitter rules\_ to clarify the  
responsibilities that should come with that status.

Roth's response hints at how Twitter would justify deviating from its longstanding policy. "To put a different spin on it: policy is one part of the system of how Twitter works... we ran into the world changing faster than we were able to either adapt the product or the policy."



The evening of January 7, the same junior employee who expressed an "unpopular opinion" about "ad hoc decisions... that don't appear rooted in policy," speaks up one last time before the end of the day.

<https://twitter.com/ShellenbergerMD/status/1601738653805387779>

Earlier that day, the employee wrote, "My concern is specifically surrounding the unarticulated logic of the decision by FB. That space fills with the idea (conspiracy theory?) that all... internet moguls... sit around like kings casually deciding what people can and cannot see."

Thursday, January 7th 2021 08.51.27 by

**My concern is specifically surrounding the unarticulated logic of the decision by FB. That's the space that fills with the idea (conspiracy theory?) that all social media heads and internet moguls at every layer sit around like kings casually deciding what people can and cannot see, and it's unhelpful to the internet ecosystem as a whole. Again this is IMHO only.**

The employee notes, later in the day, "And Will Oremus noticed the inconsistency too...", linking to an article for OneZero at Medium called, "Facebook Chucked Its Own Rulebook to Ban Trump." [onezero.medium.com](https://onezero.medium.com)

[Facebook Chucked Its Own Rulebook to Ban Trump](#)

[The move is a reminder of social platforms' power over online speech – and the inconsistency with which they wield it](#)

"The underlying problem," writes [@WillOremus](#), is that "the dominant platforms have always been loath to own up to their subjectivity, because it highlights the extraordinary, unfettered power they wield over the global public square...

"... and places the responsibility for that power on their own shoulders... So they hide behind an ever-changing rulebook, alternately pointing to it when it's convenient and shoving it under the nearest rug when it isn't."

"Facebook's suspension of Trump now puts Twitter in an awkward position. If Trump does indeed return to Twitter, the pressure on Twitter will ramp up to find a pretext on which to ban him as well."

Indeed. And as [@bariweiss](#) will show tomorrow, that's exactly what happened.

/END



**Bari Weiss**

@bariweiss

## THREAD: THE TWITTER FILES PART FIVE. THE REMOVAL OF TRUMP FROM TWITTER.

1. On the morning of January 8, President Donald Trump, with one remaining strike before being at risk of permanent suspension from Twitter, tweets twice.
2. 6:46 am: "The 75,000,000 great American Patriots who voted for me, AMERICA FIRST, and MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN, will have a GIANT VOICE long into the future. They will not be disrespected or treated unfairly in any way, shape or form!!!"



**Donald J. Trump** ✓  
@realDonaldTrump



The 75,000,000 great American Patriots who voted for me, AMERICA FIRST, and MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN, will have a GIANT VOICE long into the future. They will not be disrespected or treated unfairly in any way, shape or form!!!

6:46 AM · Jan 8, 2021

**85.3K** Retweets   **31.9K** Quote Tweets   **507K** Likes



3. 7:44 am: "To all of those who have asked, I will not be going to the Inauguration on January 20th."



**Donald J. Trump** ✓  
@realDonaldTrump



To all of those who have asked, I will not be going to the Inauguration on January 20th.

7:44 AM · Jan 8, 2021

**76.1K** Retweets   **109.2K** Quote Tweets   **609.9K** Likes

4. For years, Twitter had resisted calls both internal and external to ban Trump on the grounds that blocking a world leader from the platform or removing their controversial tweets would hide important information that people should be able to see and debate.

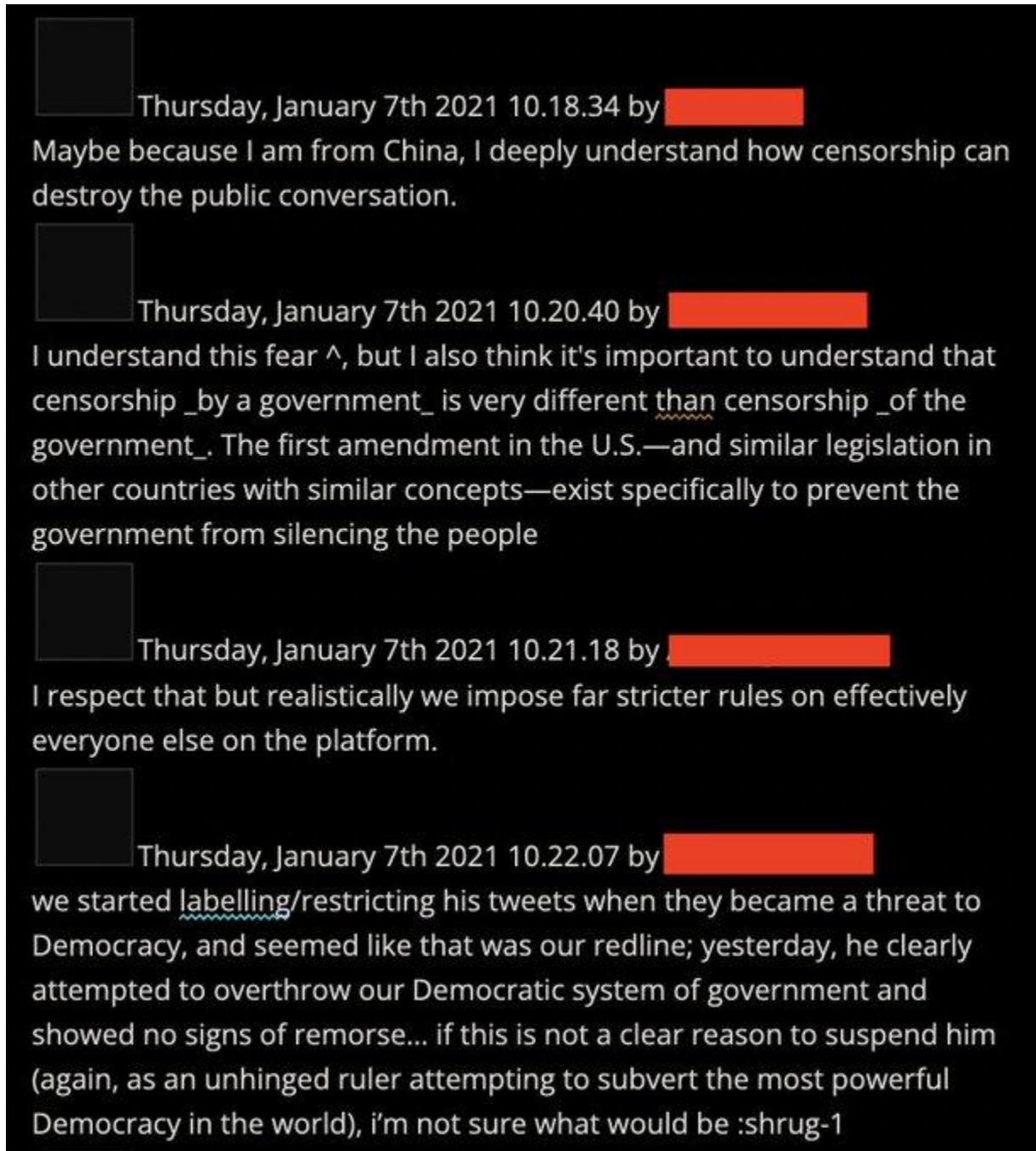
5. "Our mission is to provide a forum that enables people to be informed and to engage their leaders directly," the company wrote in 2019. Twitter's aim was to "protect the public's right to hear from their leaders and to hold them to account."

[https://blog.twitter.com/en\\_us/topics/company/2019/worldleaders2019](https://blog.twitter.com/en_us/topics/company/2019/worldleaders2019)

6. But after January 6, as [@mtaibbi](#) and [@shellenbergermd](#) have documented, pressure grew, both inside and outside of Twitter, to ban Trump.

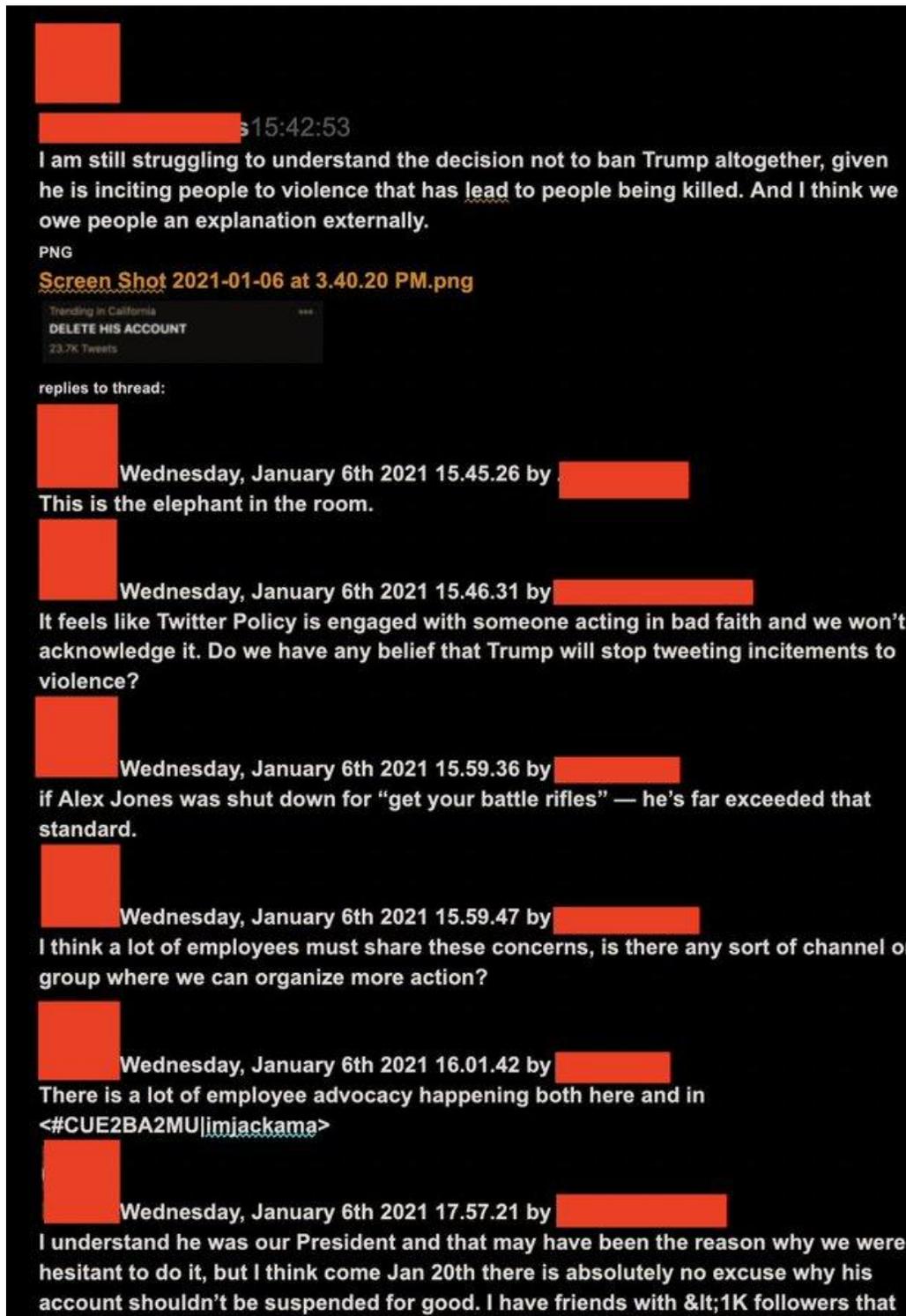
7. There were dissenters inside Twitter.

“Maybe because I am from China,” said one employee on January 7, “I deeply understand how censorship can destroy the public conversation.”



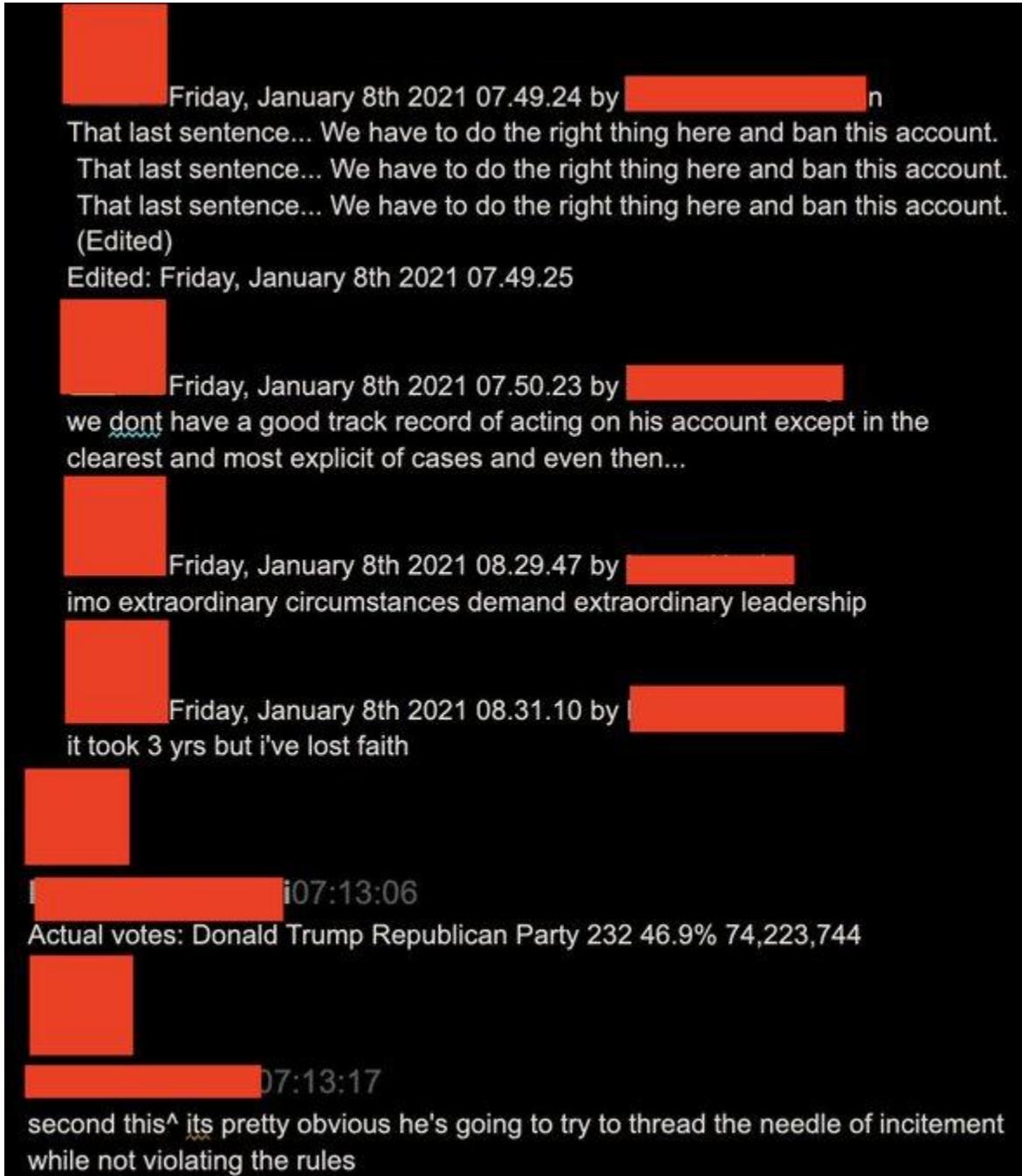
8. But voices like that one appear to have been a distinct minority within the company. Across Slack channels, many Twitter employees were upset that Trump hadn't been banned earlier.

9. After January 6, Twitter employees organized to demand their employer ban Trump. "There is a lot of employee advocacy happening," said one Twitter employee.



10. "We have to do the right thing and ban this account," said one staffer.

It's "pretty obvious he's going to try to thread the needle of incitement without violating the rules," said another.



11. In the early afternoon of January 8, The Washington Post published an open letter signed by over 300 Twitter employees to CEO Jack Dorsey demanding Trump's ban. "We must examine Twitter's complicity in what President-Elect Biden has rightly termed insurrection."

12. But the Twitter staff assigned to evaluate tweets quickly concluded that Trump had *\*not\** violated Twitter's policies. "I think we'd have a hard time saying this is incitement," wrote one staffer.

13. "It's pretty clear he's saying the 'American Patriots' are the ones who voted for him and not the terrorists (we can call them that, right?) from Wednesday."

14. Another staffer agreed: "Don't see the incitement angle here."



15. "I also am not seeing clear or coded incitement in the DJT tweet," wrote Anika Navaroli, a Twitter policy official. "I'll respond in the elections channel and say that our team has assessed and found no vios"—or violations—"for the DJT one."



**Anika Navaroli**07:33:20  
I also am not seeing clear or coded incitement in the DJT tweet



**Anika Navaroli**07:34:08  
I'll respond in the elections channel and say that our team has assessed and found no vios for the DJT one



**[Redacted]**07:40:38  
Flagging that Yoel is  
{<https://twitter.slack.com/archives/G01J5F71DV0/p1610120352063000>} |  
looking for an assessment of the DJT Tweet in the HP DC crisis channel.

16. She does just that: "as an fyi, Safety has assessed the DJT Tweet above and determined that there is no violation of our policies at this time."



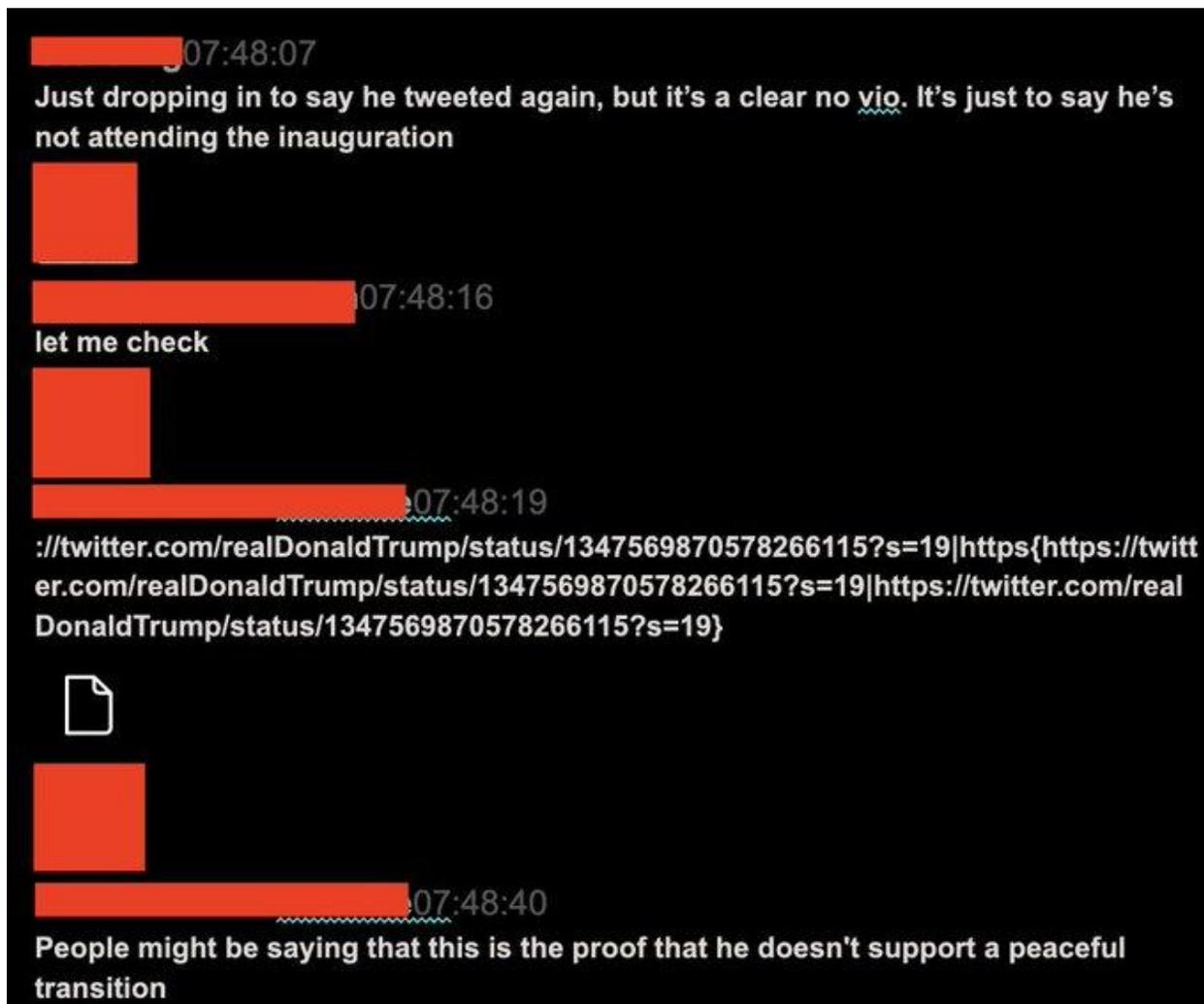
**[Redacted]** Friday, January 8th 2021 07.17.51 by **[Redacted]**  
sorry I stepped out for a while. Let me know Yoel if any action will be taken



**Anika Navaroli**07:34:50  
as an fyi, Safety has assessed the DJT Tweet above and determined that there is no violation of our policies at this time

17. (Later, Navaroli would testify to the House Jan. 6 committee: “For months I had been begging and anticipating and attempting to raise the reality that if nothing—if we made no intervention into what I saw occurring, people were going to die.”)

18. Next, Twitter’s safety team decides that Trump’s 7:44 am ET tweet is also not in violation. They are unequivocal: “it’s a clear no vio. It’s just to say he’s not attending the inauguration”



19. To understand Twitter’s decision to ban Trump, we must consider how Twitter deals with other heads of state and political leaders, including in Iran, Nigeria, and Ethiopia.

20. In June 2018, Iran’s Ayatollah Ali Khamenei tweeted, “#Israel is a malignant cancerous tumor in the West Asian region that has to be removed and eradicated: it is possible and it will happen.”

Twitter neither deleted the tweet nor banned the Ayatollah.



**Khamenei.ir**  
@khamenei\_ir



Our stance against Israel is the same stance we have always taken. [#Israel](#) is a malignant cancerous tumor in the West Asian region that has to be removed and eradicated: it is possible and it will happen. 7/31/91  
[#GreatReturnMarch](#)

10:49 AM · Jun 3, 2018

**3,487** Retweets   **5,699** Quote Tweets   **9,854** Likes

21. In October 2020, the former Malaysian Prime Minister said it was “a right” for Muslims to “kill millions of French people.”

Twitter deleted his tweet for “glorifying violence,” but he remains on the platform. The tweet below was taken from the Wayback Machine:



**Dr Mahathir Mohamad**   
@chedetofficial

Follow



12. Muslims have a right to be angry and to kill millions of French people for the massacres of the past.

3:47 AM - 29 Oct 2020

**273** Retweets   **383** Likes



967

273

383

22. Muhammadu Buhari, the President of Nigeria, incited violence against pro-Biafra groups. "Those of us in the fields for 30 months, who went through the war," he wrote, "will treat them in the language they understand."

Twitter deleted the tweet but didn't ban Buhari.

23. In October 2021, Twitter allowed Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to call on citizens to take up arms against the Tigray region.

Twitter allowed the tweet to remain up, and did not ban the prime minister.



**Abiy Ahmed Ali**    
@AbiyAhmedAli



This Tweet violated the Twitter Rules about abusive behavior. However, Twitter has determined that it may be in the public's interest for the Tweet to remain accessible. [Learn more](#)

ሆነው ኢትዮጵያ ላይ የተከፈተውን ጥቃት ለመመከት በሁሉም ግንባሮች ተሰልፏል። ጠላት የመጨረሻ አቅሙን አሟጥጦ ለማጥቃት የሚያደርገውን ጥረት ሠራዊታችን በምድርና በአየር እየታገዘ እንዲይነሳ አድርጎ እየሰበረው ይገኛል።

በሦስቱ ግንባሮች እንደሚኖረው የተገነዘበው አሸባሪው ሕወሐት፣ ሰሞኑን ያለ የሌላ ኃይሉን ሀገርን ከጥቃት የመከላከል ኃላፊነት የጥቂቶች ሳይሆን የሁላችንም ነው። እያንዳንዱ ዜጋ ከእኔ ምን ይጠበቃል? እኔ ምን እያደረኩ ነው? ማለት አለበት። የእሱ ደህንነት እንዲጠበቅ፣ እሱ ሰላም ውሎ እንዲያደር፣ ሠርቶ እንዲያተርፍ ለእሱ ሲሉ ሌሎች የሚሰውበት ምክንያት የለም። ሁሉም ከወዙ ጨልፎ፣ ከደሙ ቀንሶና ከአጥንቱ ፈልጦ በሚያተበረክተው አስተዋጽኦ ነው ሀገር ነፍስ ኖሯት።

አይቀርም። የጠላት የጥንካሬ ምንጭ የእኛ ድክመትና መዘናጋት እንደሆነ እውቀን ነቅተንና ተባብረን ልንጠብቀው ይገባል። ብዛታችን ጥንካሬ የሚሆነው ተግባብተን በአንድነት ስንቆም ነው። መነጣጠላችን ለጠላት ይመቻል። በሚነዛው ፕሮፓጋንዳ መረባረብን እሱን ካልሆነ በቀር ማንንም አይጠቅምም። እርስ በእርሳችን መደማመጥና መተባበር ከቻልን መፍረክረክ የጀመረ የጠላት የቀደምት እያቶችንን የጀግንነት ፈላግ በመከተል ማንኛውንም እኩይ ተግባር ማክሸፍ እንደምንችል ማመን አለብን። አሁን የገጠሙን ፈተናዎች የማይታለፉ እና ውስብስብ ሊመሰሉ ይችላሉ። ነገር ግን ቀደምቶቻችን ካዩት መከራ የሚከብዱ አይደሉም። ቁልፉ ጉዳይ በአንድነት መቆም፣ በጥሞና መደማመጥ እና ተቀናጅቶ መንቀሳቀስ ናቸው። ይኼን ካደረግን የቀደመው ትውልድ

24. In early February 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government threatened to arrest Twitter employees in India, and to incarcerate them for up to seven years after they restored hundreds of accounts that had been critical of him.

Twitter did not ban Modi.

## ***Twitter Blocks Accounts in India as Modi Pressures Social Media***

The platform's problems in the country offer a stark example of the difficulty of adhering to its free-speech principles amid government worries over its influence.

25. But Twitter executives did ban Trump, even though key staffers said that Trump had not incited violence—not even in a “coded” way.

26. Less than 90 minutes after Twitter employees had determined that Trump's tweets were not in violation of Twitter policy, Vijaya Gadde—Twitter's Head of Legal, Policy, and Trust—asked whether it could, in fact, be “coded incitement to further violence.”



**Vijaya Gadde**09:11:01

Thanks. The biggest question is whether a tweet like the one this morning from Trump, which isn't a rule violation on its face, is being used as coded incitement to further violence



**Vijaya Gadde**09:11:25

If you have any context or insight we should consider, I'm all ears



**Vijaya Gadde**09:13:05

Eg use of term "American Patriots" and "They will not be disrespected or treated unfairly in any way, shape or form!!!"



**[Redacted]**09:15:49

This is an interesting question. I am going to speak with my team ASAP to see if we can run a quick survey to get reactions to the language contained in the tweet and get back to you



**Vijaya Gadde**09:16:45

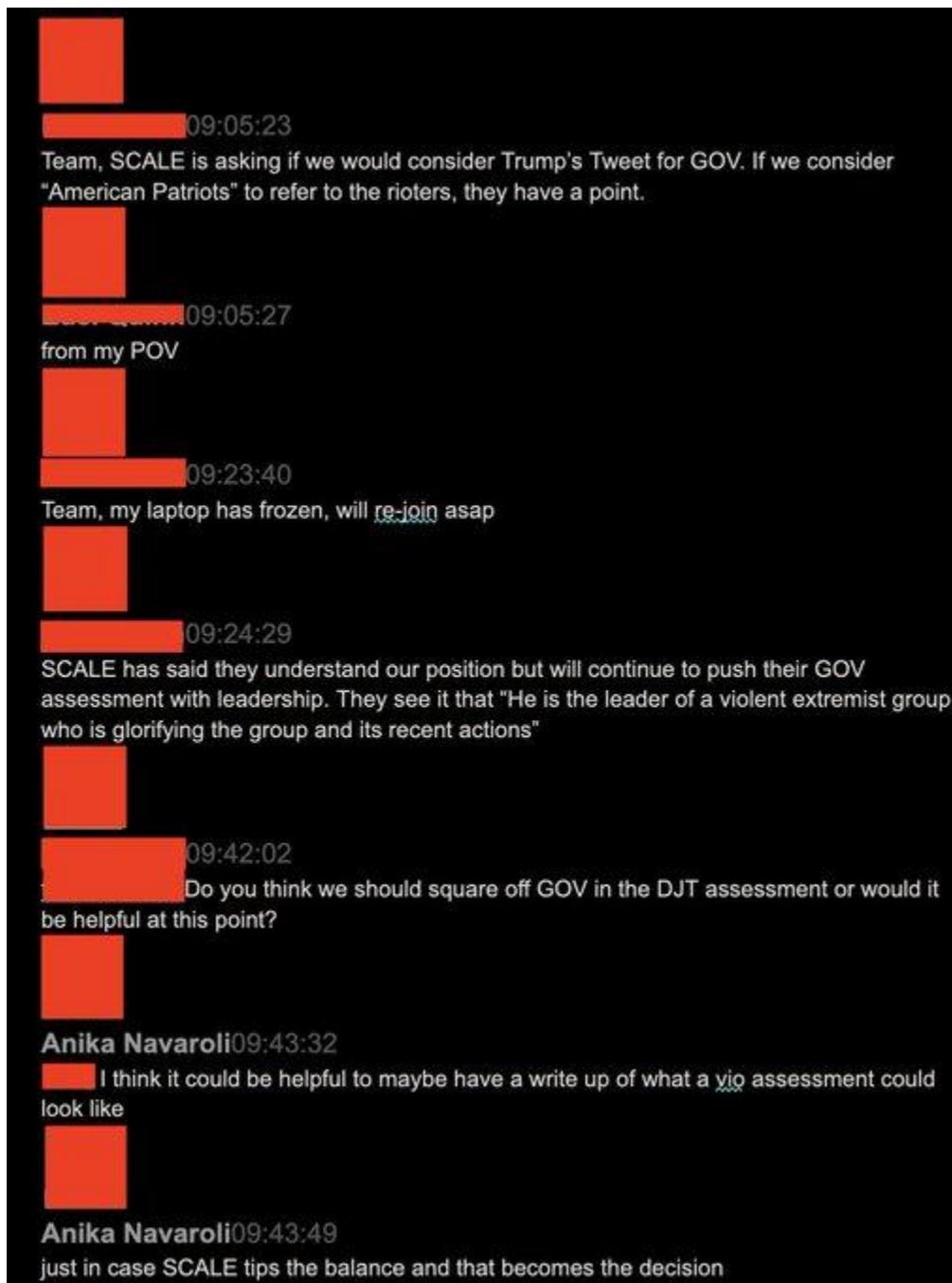
I'm not sure I would rely on a survey...i worry about how that would be perceived externally.



**Vijaya Gadde**09:17:16

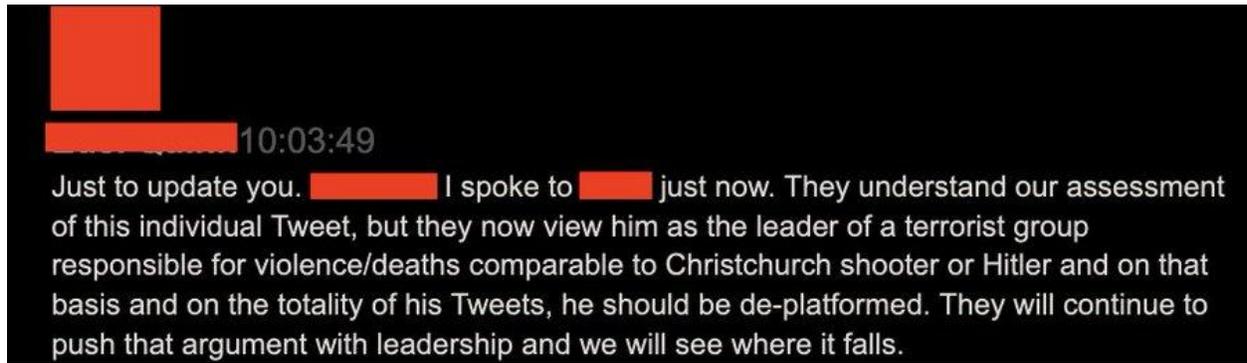
Wondering if we have anything in past research that could be relevant

27. A few minutes later, Twitter employees on the “scaled enforcement team” suggest that Trump’s tweet may have violated Twitter’s Glorification of Violence policy—if you interpreted the phrase “American Patriots” to refer to the rioters.



28. Things escalate from there.

Members of that team came to “view him as the leader of a terrorist group responsible for violence/deaths comparable to Christchurch shooter or Hitler and on that basis and on the totality of his Tweets, he should be de-platformed.”

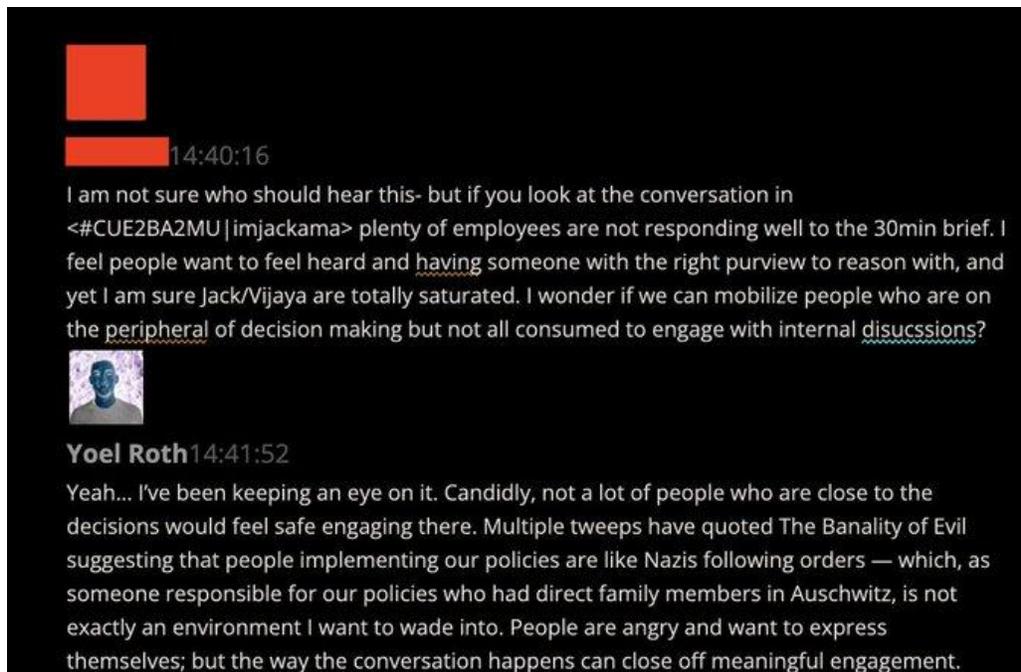


29. Two hours later, Twitter executives host a 30-minute all-staff meeting.

Jack Dorsey and Vijaya Gadde answer staff questions as to why Trump wasn't banned yet.

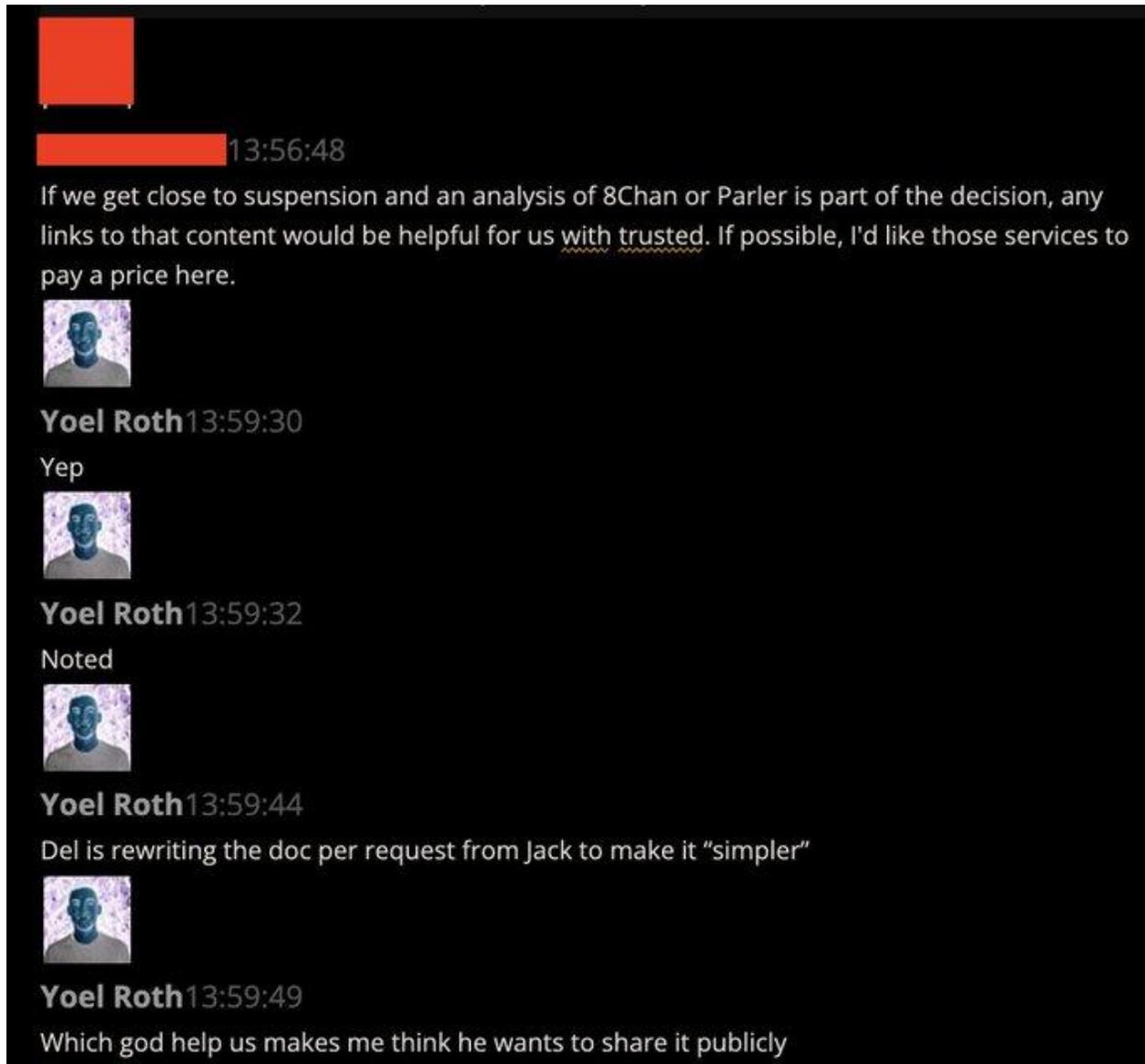
But they make some employees angrier.

30. “Multiple tweeps [Twitter employees] have quoted the Banality of Evil suggesting that people implementing our policies are like Nazis following orders,” relays Yoel Roth to a colleague.



31. Dorsey requested simpler language to explain Trump's suspension.

Roth wrote, "god help us [this] makes me think he wants to share it publicly"



[Redacted]

[Redacted] 13:56:48

If we get close to suspension and an analysis of 8Chan or Parler is part of the decision, any links to that content would be helpful for us with trusted. If possible, I'd like those services to pay a price here.

  
**Yoel Roth** 13:59:30

Yep

  
**Yoel Roth** 13:59:32

Noted

  
**Yoel Roth** 13:59:44

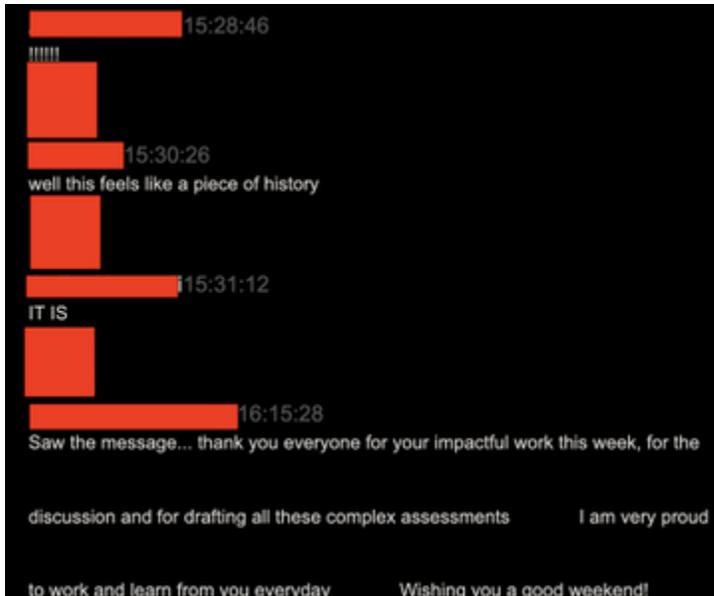
Del is rewriting the doc per request from Jack to make it "simpler"

  
**Yoel Roth** 13:59:49

Which god help us makes me think he wants to share it publicly

31. Dorsey requested simpler language to explain Trump's suspension.

Roth wrote, "god help us [this] makes me think he wants to share it publicly"



34. And congratulatory: "big props to whoever in trust and safety is sitting there whack-a-mole-ing these trump accounts"



18:39:55

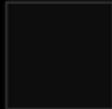
big props to whoever in trust and safety is sitting there whack-a-mole-ing these trump accounts



18:41:11

can we get them one of these awesome cards I've heard about

replies to thread:



Friday, January 8th 2021 18:46:35 by [redacted]

definitely some extraordinary acts of awesomeness going on around twitter right now



18:41:14

Don Jr's account needs to be locked too

35. By the next day, employees expressed eagerness to tackle “medical misinformation” as soon as possible:

^ what [REDACTED] said. Yes, we absolutely plan to do this in 2021 - with the timeline being “as soon as possible.” COVID is one specific disease; medical misinformation is a much broader category of harmful content. We’ve laid a lot of the groundwork for policy and product behavior through our work on COVID and the election; the Misinfo Policy team in T&S, along with the folks in Health Experience, TwS, Research, and other teams across the company are now focused on getting to a place of improved maturity in how our policies are actualized (across reporting, operations, global scale, scope, etc). We’ll have more to share on this soon! (Edited)

Edited: Saturday, January 9th 2021 09.30.06



Saturday, January 9th 2021 11.43.27 by [REDACTED]

Thank you!

36. “For the longest time, Twitter’s stance was that we aren’t the arbiter of truth,” wrote another employee, “which I respected but never gave me a warm fuzzy feeling.”



Monday, January 11th 2021 15.02.15 by [REDACTED]

Very excited to see us handling more categories of misinformation. For the longest time, Twitter’s stance was that we aren’t the arbiter of truth which I respected but never gave me a warm fuzzy feeling. That said, my dad is an MD (to give context) and medical misinformation is a really hard topic. Even for COVID-19 we only covered a narrow category of information. As an example is “Take vitamin C, vitamin D, elderberry, and xylitol with GSE daily to reduce covid-19 risk” good information, creative marketing, or misinformation? Personally, I’m not sure and I suspect there are views on both sides.

37. But Twitter’s COO Parag Agrawal—who would later succeed Dorsey as CEO—told Head of Security Mudge Zatko: “I think a few of us should brainstorm the ripple effects” of Trump’s ban. Agrawal added: “centralized content moderation IMO has reached a breaking point now.”



**Parag Agrawal** 16:08:43

i think a few of us should brainstorm the ripple effects, and potential fragmentation of public conversation



**Parag Agrawal** 16:08:54

and how we might adapt



**Mudge Zatko** 16:15:32

Who are you suggesting?



**Parag Agrawal** 16:16:31

not sure, a few of us on staff maybe to start



**Parag Agrawal** 16:17:04

the future of public conversation feels uncertain to me.



**Parag Agrawal** 16:18:04

to my mind, we need to move fast towards opening up control over policies and enforcement and decentralizing it. centralized content moderation IMO has reached a breaking point now.



16:15:13

interested to hear what people think now that its played out the way it has ...



**Parag Agrawal** 16:19:39

i think more imp question now is the future of public conversation. in my mind, this is the end of the road for centralized content moderation — hard to believe that this approach will be sustainable moving forward.



**Parag Agrawal** 16:24:09

suggested to mudge that a few of us get together to anticipate ripple effects and decide on how we want to mobilize for the change ahead

38. Outside the United States, Twitter’s decision to ban Trump raised alarms, including with French President Emmanuel Macron, German Prime Minister Angela Merkel, and Mexico’s President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador.

39. Macron told an audience he didn’t “want to live in a democracy where the key decisions” were made by private players. “I want it to be decided by a law voted by your representative, or by regulation, governance, democratically discussed and approved by democratic leaders.”

40. Merkel’s spokesperson called Twitter’s decision to ban Trump from its platform “problematic” and added that the freedom of opinion is of “elementary significance.”

Russian opposition leader Alexey Navalny criticized the ban as “an unacceptable act of censorship.”

41. Whether you agree with Navalny and Macron or the executives at Twitter, we hope this latest installment of [#TheTwitterFiles](#) gave you insight into that unprecedented decision.

42. From the outset, our goal in investigating this story was to discover and document the steps leading up to the banning of Trump and to put that choice into context.

43. Ultimately, the concerns about Twitter’s efforts to censor news about Hunter Biden’s laptop, blacklist disfavored views, and ban a president aren’t about the past choices of executives in a social media company.

44. They’re about the power of a handful of people at a private company to influence the public discourse and democracy.

45. This was reported by [@ShellenbergerMD](#), [@IsaacGrafstein](#), [@SnoozyWeiss](#), [@Olivia\\_Reingold](#), [@petersavodnik](#), [@NellieBowles](#). Follow all of our work at The Free Press: [@TheFP](#)

46. Please click here to subscribe to The Free Press, where you can continue reading and supporting independent journalism: <https://www.thefp.com/subscribe>

## Pinned Tweet



**Matt Taibbi**

@mtaibbi

# 1. THREAD: The Twitter Files, Part Six TWITTER, THE FBI SUBSIDIARY

2. The [#TwitterFiles](#) are revealing more every day about how the government collects, analyzes, and flags your social media content.
3. Twitter's contact with the FBI was constant and pervasive, as if it were a subsidiary.
4. Between January 2020 and November 2022, there were over 150 emails between the FBI and former Twitter Trust and Safety chief Yoel Roth.
5. Some are mundane, like San Francisco agent Elvis Chan wishing Roth a Happy New Year along with a reminder to attend "our quarterly call next week." Others are requests for information into Twitter users related to active investigations.
6. But a surprisingly high number are requests by the FBI for Twitter to take action on election misinformation, even involving joke tweets from low-follower accounts.
7. The FBI's social media-focused task force, known as FTIF, created in the wake of the 2016 election, swelled to 80 agents and corresponded with Twitter to identify alleged foreign influence and election tampering of all kinds.
8. Federal intelligence and law enforcement reach into Twitter included the Department of Homeland Security, which partnered with security contractors and think tanks to pressure Twitter to moderate content.
9. It's no secret the government analyzes bulk data for all sorts of purposes, everything from tracking terror suspects to making economic forecasts.
10. The [#TwitterFiles](#) show something new: agencies like the FBI and DHS regularly sending social media content to Twitter through multiple entry points, pre-flagged for moderation.

11. What stands out is the sheer quantity of reports from the government. Some are aggregated from public hotlines:



**FBI El Paso** ✓  
@FBIEIPaso



Election day protocol for FBI Headquarters is to stand up a National Election Command Post which provides a centralized location for assessing election-related threats. Status reports and complaints are tracked. Have a tip send it to [tips.fbi.gov](https://tips.fbi.gov) or 915-832-5000.

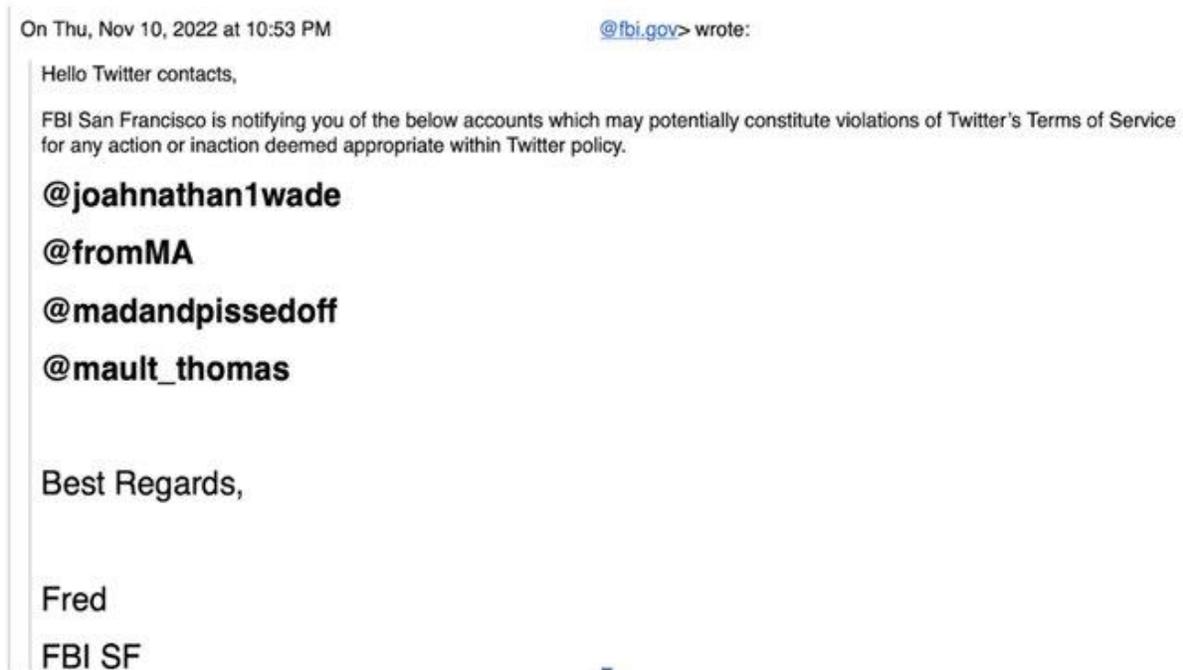


10:10 AM · Nov 3, 2020

28 Retweets 4 Quote Tweets 46 Likes

12. An unanswered question: do agencies like FBI and DHS do in-house flagging work themselves, or farm it out? “You have to prove to me that inside the fucking government you can do any kind of massive data or AI search,” says one former intelligence officer.

“HELLO TWITTER CONTACTS”: The master-canine quality of the FBI’s relationship to Twitter comes through in this November 2022 email, in which “FBI San Francisco is notifying you” it wants action on four accounts:



14. Twitter personnel in that case went on to look for reasons to suspend all four accounts, including [@fromma](#), whose tweets are almost all jokes (see sample below), including his “civic misinformation” of Nov. 8:



15. Just to show the FBI can be hyper-intrusive in both directions, they also asked Twitter to review a blue-leaning account for a different joke, except here it was even more obvious that [@clairefosterPHD](#), who kids a lot, was kidding:



Hello Twitter contacts,

FBI San Francisco is notifying you of the below account activities which may potentially constitute violations of Twitter's Terms of Service for any action or inaction deemed appropriate within Twitter policy.

Thank you!

Katherine

- Twitter post by user @byrum\_wade, display name "ULTRA MAGA", stating the following: "Americans, Vote today. Democrats you vote Wednesday 9th." The tweet was posted on 8 November 2022 at 2:10 AM CST.
- Twitter account "@ClaireFosterPHD" claimed in her posts that she is a ballot counter in her state and, in additional posts, states "For every negative comment on this post, I'm adding another vote for the democrats" and "If you're not wearing a mask, I'm not counting your vote."

Private Sector Engagement Squad

FBI San Francisco

16. "Anyone who cannot discern obvious satire from reality has no place making decisions for others or working for the feds," said [@ClaireFosterPHD](#), when told about the flagging.

17. Of the six accounts mentioned in the previous two emails, all but two – [@ClaireFosterPHD](#) and [@FromMa](#) – were suspended.

[18.In](#) an internal email from November 5, 2022, the FBI's National Election Command Post, which compiles and sends on complaints, sent the SF field office a long list of accounts that "may warrant additional action":

---

**From:** @fbi.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 6, 2022, 12:56 PM  
**Cc:** @fbi.gov>; @fbi.gov>; @fbi.gov>; @fbi.gov>  
**Subject:** request for Coordination with Twitter

ASAC Chan,

The National Election Command Post (NECP) is requesting assistance from SF regarding coordination with Twitter. Specifically, NECP has been made aware of Tweets by certain accounts that may warrant additional action due to the accounts being utilized to spread misinformation about the upcoming election. Specifically, NECP is requesting the following:

1. Coordination between SF and Twitter to determine whether the accounts identified below have violated Twitter's terms of service and may be subject any actions deemed appropriate by Twitter.
2. The issuance of preservation letters regarding the accounts identified below in order to preserve subscriber information and content information pending the issuance of legal process.
3. Any location information associated with the accounts that Twitter will voluntarily provide to aid the FBI in assigning any follow-up deemed necessary to the appropriate FBI field office.

**Twitter Accounts**

1. @DartfulCodger
2. @DrAndrewJackson
3. @DanDuryeas
4. @2020\_mtb
5. @JeanneGary13
6. @RSBNetwork
7. @Davidkloy
8. @Ronsmit49336969
9. @AScottHoneycut
10. @thearmogidaship
11. @Davidkloy
12. @lexitolah
13. @Tiboron11
14. @wisefrog57
15. @hfsboatr5
16. @chriswest567
17. @Trump2017847791
18. @kag2020\_2024
19. @Tiberius444
20. @BillyBaldwin
21. @chrisfig33ad
22. @michaelp4283
23. @BrettBarker22
24. @EPaul9
25. @warrenintronno

Please let us know if you need additional information to process this request by replying all to this email.

Thanks,

--Michael

19. Agent Chan passed the list on to his "Twitter folks":

On Sun, Nov 6, 2022 at 9:10 PM Elvis Chan [REDACTED]@fbi.gov> wrote:

Twitter folks,

Please see below list of Twitter accounts which we believe are violating your terms of service by disseminating false information about the time, place, or manner of the upcoming elections.

Let us know if you decide to take any actions against these accounts based on our tipper to you. Also let us know if we need to issue a preservation letter as we intend to serve legal process for these accounts. Thanks for your consideration.

Regards, Elvis

Elvis M. Chan  
Asst. Special Agent in Charge  
FBI San Francisco, Cyber Branch  
Work: [REDACTED]  
Cell: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]@fbi.gov  
Pronouns: he, him, his



21. Many of the above accounts were satirical in nature, nearly all (with the exceptions of Baldwin and @RSBNetwork) were relatively low engagement, and some were suspended, most with a generic, "Thanks, Twitter" letter:



Hello,

We're writing to let you know that we have reviewed your appeal, and your account features will remain locked or limited for the allotted time or pending completion of the assigned task(s), due to violations of the Twitter Rules.

Attempted voter suppression, including attempted voter intimidation or providing false information about voting or registering to vote, or any unlawful activity, is prohibited under our Rules. You can review these guidelines at <https://twitter.com/rules>.

Thanks,

Twitter



@BrettBarker22

### Account suspended

Twitter suspends accounts that violate the Twitter Rules. Learn more



@christwest567

### Account suspended

Twitter suspends accounts that violate the Twitter Rules. Learn more



@EPau9

### Account suspended

Twitter suspends accounts that violate the Twitter Rules. Learn more



@JeanneGary13

### Account suspended

Twitter suspends accounts that violate the Twitter Rules. Learn more



@wisefrog57

**Ronald Klein** @RWHCCS - Nov 5  
 United States government official  
 Also, a President told people that they should reject floods.

**Scott Gottlieb, MD** @ScottGottliebMD - Nov 5  
 Will discuss decision made during Covid that impacted families, some of hardest were school closures, in WSJ 1 week in 2020 from my.com/articles/2020/10/29/and-here-we-go-dont-let-these-...-that-stores-should-open-schools-Mary-Be-my-state-CT-made-it-top-priority-others-didnt-Show-the-thread

4.9K 1.4K 1.2K

**Dr. Jimmy and Mr. Jim** @jimmyjim  
 Replying to @RWHCCS  
 Lying sos

6:55 PM - Nov 5, 2022

**Jason Whitlock** @WhitlockJason - Oct 29  
 Any good theories on this Paul Pelosi story? Small, Jewish, Donaldist, eh?

65.2K 5.5K 52.0K

**Mike @circulab035** - Oct 29  
 Replying to @WhitlockJason  
 Secret lovers lol

**A. Scott Henegault** @AScottHenegault - Nov 7  
 Replying to @circulab035 @jimmyjim @jimjim and 16 others  
 Thanks for the boost Andy!  
 Votal Votal Votal



**Adam Parkhomenko** @AdamParkhomenko - Oct 14  
 Roger Stone calls Ivanka Trump Donald's "abort-once-birth-daughter"



**RSBN** @RSBNetwork - Nov 3  
 Trump St. Ann's 'yggal' 2020 election "YOUR FAVORITE PRESIDENT GOT SCREWED"



**Dr. Andrew Jackson** @DrAndrewJackson - Nov 4  
 Democrats equate white woman Republicans to roaches.

29 28 90



Chris Figueroa

Chosen servant of our Heavenly Father. Justified by Christ's atonement. Regenerated by the Holy Spirit  
 Chino, CA Joined July 2013  
 78 Following 25 Followers  
 Not followed by anyone you're following

**Chris Figueroa** @chrisfig33ad - Oct 28  
 Trans women are not women. Trans men are not men. Drag queen story hour is really for gnomes. The Biden crime family is astounding. Rough Ukraine as a quid pro quo for the millions Biden and the "Big Guy" received. Add to the load!!!!

**Billy Baldwin** @BillyBaldwin - Nov 1  
 If the Supreme Court releases Trump's tax returns... Trump goes to prison.

Full stop.

8,315 4,580 20.6K

**Billy Baldwin** @BillyBaldwin - Oct 31  
 Yes or No: Do you think Elon Musk is using Twitter to help deliver the midterm elections to the Republicans?

17.8K 3,821 25.4K

**President Biden** @POTUS - Nov 20  
 United States government official  
 My Administration remains deeply committed to strengthening the rights of LGBTQ+ Americans, including transgender Americans.

On Transgender Day of Remembrance, let us resolve to continue building a country where every American can live free from fear and discrimination.

4,340 6,614 38.5K

**Robert Lisciarullo** @RLisciarullo - Nov 20  
 Hey @potus! Any chance we can get a like button for tweets? I think it's only fair to see the ratio of like to dislikes.

**Tiberius** @Tiberius444 - Nov 5  
 There's a simple way for DeSantis to avoid fracturing the party. He can just endorse Trump.

**Will Chamberlain** @willchamberlain - Nov 5  
 There's a simple way for Trump to avoid fracturing the party. He can just endorse DeSantis.

Trump had his chance in 2020. He lost the election, he's now 78 years old, and there's a republican governor in Florida who's already a better candidate.

twittr.com/Peoples\_Pundit...  
 (Show this thread)

1 1 26

**Holger Schwab** @holger15 - Nov 3  
 You can keep your shirt above.



**Billy Baldwin** @BillyBaldwin - Nov 1  
 If the Supreme Court releases Trump's tax returns... Trump goes to prison.

Full stop.

8,315 4,580 20.6K

**Billy Baldwin** @BillyBaldwin - Oct 31  
 Yes or No: Do you think Elon Musk is using Twitter to help deliver the midterm elections to the Republicans?

17.8K 3,821 25.4K

**Triple 7** @triple70204 - Nov 6  
 The only thing we received under the Biden administration and the latest Democratic Party, was an unknown gender! Follow the science they like to say, "Go Waaa"



**Christian Amegida** @C1  
 Just going through my kid school looking for that s would be rampantly give

2

22. When told of the FBI flagging, [@Lexitollah](#) replied: "My thoughts initially include 1. Seems like prima facie 1A violation 2. Holy cow, me, an account with the reach of an amoeba 3. What else are they looking at?"

23. "I can't believe the FBI is policing jokes on Twitter. That's crazy," said [@Tiberius444](#).

...24.In a letter to former Deputy General Counsel (and former top FBI lawyer) Jim Baker on Sep. 16, 2022, legal exec Stacia Cardille outlines results from her “soon to be weekly” meeting with DHS, DOJ, FBI, and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence:

SC

Stacia Cardille

Elections Work: Wednesday, September 16

To: Jim Baker

Jim Baker - FBI September 16, 2022 at 11:31 PM

Please see below for a summary of elections-related work I completed today, Wednesday, September 16:

(1) **Government-Industry Sync.** I participated in our monthly (soon to be weekly) 90-minute meeting with FBI, DOJ, DHS, ODNI, and industry peers on election threats. A few items to note:

- Foreign adversaries are amplifying themes being advanced by domestic actors to undermining the legitimacy of the election. USG specifically referenced vote by mail.
- I explicitly asked if there were any impediments with the ability of the government to share classified information or other relevant information with industry. FBI was adamant that no impediments to information sharing exist.
- I asked if USG was tracking foreign threats related to non-presidential races. Long silence. The government is not tracking foreign interference or threats related to down ballot races.
- DHS has created a chart of key dates in the election process at the state level. They are confirming information with the states this week, and should get us a summary chart of key dates next week.
- @Policy tweeted about the meeting without Legal review. As the only Twitter representative to speak, I raised my disappointment in the lack of my involvement directly to Policy Comms. It was a missed opportunity to document some key points of the meeting from our perspective.

(2) **Project Heron.** I met with Legal, Trust & Safety, and Public Policy stakeholders to discuss an intervention under consideration regarding labeling election results. I raised concerns about feasibility and I relayed first-hand experience with news media mistakes during a challenging primary season. I separately met with Sam and Matt to discuss worst case scenario planning. I will meet with them again tomorrow on the project.

(3) **Civic Integrity Labeling.** Enforcement on our expanded Civic Integrity Policy begins tomorrow, Thursday, September 17. I provided feedback on a Scenario Planning Document that includes approving the language of the labels. I also reviewed a Moment that will link to Vote by Mail claims, consulted with outside counsel on the inclusion of one Tweet, and provided content-related advice to the Curation team.

(4) **Account Security Upgrades.** On Thursday, September 17, over 2,300 high-risk politician and journalist accounts will be prompted to upgrade their security settings. (See description from yesterday.) I reviewed and approved (1) the Comms plan and (2) the email to external stakeholders. I also told Public Policy of the 14 accounts that needed additional attention due to missing email addresses.

(5) **Board Update.** I worked closely with Mathew on additional edits to the Board narrative and the accompanying chart.

(6) **Escalations.** I handled the following escalations:

- Responded to DHS regarding information they provided on a Facebook operation – we found no analogous activity.
- Worked with Angela to try to get this terrible impersonation account spewing 9/11 conspiracy theories impersonating a DCCC staffer whose dad died in 9/11. Pending.
- Flagged a specific Tweet on Illinois use of modems to transmit election results in potential violation of the civic integrity policy (except they do use that tech in limited circumstances).
- Scheduling meeting with OH Secretary of State media director.
- Working with @gov to ensure we handle the verification of the OH Speaker of the House.
- Followup on Dubuque County verification request with Lisa.
- Solicited additional information from Yobel on product functionality and limitations around retweeting labeled content so we can explain to DNC.
- Lincoln Project is not pleased their video was labeled under SAMM. Bridget is driving that interaction.
- Allowlisted @DonWinstow and @Springsteen.

(7) **Policy Comms.** In addition to the Comms work on the security upgrades, I

25. The Twitter exec writes she explicitly asked if there were “impediments” to the sharing of classified information “with industry.” The answer? “FBI was adamant no impediments to sharing exist.”

26. This passage underscores the unique one-big-happy-family vibe between Twitter and the FBI. With what other firm would the FBI blithely agree to “no impediments” to classified information?

27. At the bottom of that letter, she lists a series of “escalations” apparently raised at the meeting, which were already “handled.”

28. About one, she writes: “Flagged a specific Tweet on Illinois use of modems to transmit election results in possible violation of the civic integrity policy (except they do use that tech in limited circumstances).”

29. Another internal letter from January, 2021 shows Twitter execs processing an FBI list of “possible violative content” tweets:

---

**From:** Unified Escalations ue@twitter.com  
**Subject:** [JIRA] UE-49841 Report by the FBI on Possible Violative Content  
**Date:** January 5, 2021 at 2:26 PM  
**To:** us-elections-escalations@twitter.com



You have been added as a participant.

You can track your ticket here - <https://jira.twitter.biz/servicedesk/customer/portal/500/UE-49841>

DESCRIPTION:

Hi GETSupport, please see these Tweets reported by the FBI as possible violations of our policies. <https://twitter.com/comicbooknerd64/status/1346521521737650185?s=10>  
<https://twitter.com/comicbooknerd64/status/1346523888352686080?s=10>  
<https://twitter.com/lonireeder/status/1346498820494905344?s=10>  
<https://twitter.com/plf28807288/status/1346478916639211522?s=10>  
<https://twitter.com/meezplz/status/1346245697230823426?s=10>  
<https://twitter.com/meezplz/status/1345886920979738626?s=10>  
<https://twitter.com/bmwyates/status/1345379162769543169?s=10> Thank you, Stacia

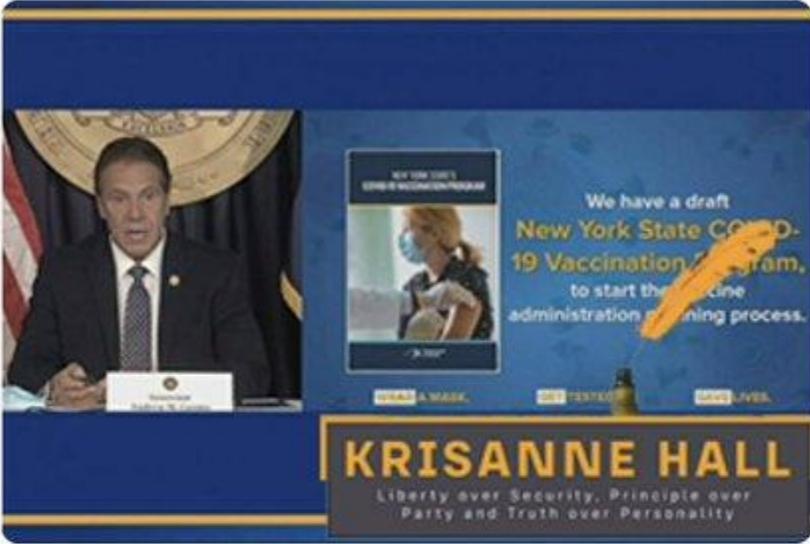
--

...30. Here, too, most tweets contained the same, "Get out there and vote Wednesday!" trope and had low engagement. This is what the FBI spends its time on:

---

 **Susan UnitedWeStand** @SGaeta88 · 11 Std. ▼

So, Cuomo wants to imprison suspected Covid carriers, force Vaccinations without due process?  
Things Power hungry madmen would do!  
[@realDonaldTrump](#)  
[@FLOTUS](#)  
[krisannehall.com/index.php/reso...](https://krisannehall.com/index.php/reso...)



 56  343  322

 **B Yates** @BmwYates Folgen ▼

Antwort an [@SGaeta88](#) [@amandadonnell14](#) und 2 weitere

This is our future guys if the dems get full control. If you are in Georgia you better vote Wednesday.

06:39 - 2. Jan. 2021

---

31. In this March, 2021 email, an FBI liaison thanks a senior Twitter exec for the chance to speak to “you and the team,” then delivers a packet of “products”:

----- Forwarded message -----  
From: [REDACTED] (IB) (FBI) [REDACTED]@fbi.gov>  
Date: Wed, Mar 3, 2021 at 11:38 AM  
Subject: DSAC Products - 3/1  
To: Stacia Cardille [REDACTED]

Hi Stacia,

It was great speaking with you and the team at Twitter last week. I wanted to flag a few products that were released today, and earlier in the week, that may be of assistance to Twitter.  
Let us know if you have any questions.

Kindly,

[REDACTED]

32. The executive circulates the “products,” which are really DHS bulletins stressing the need for greater collaboration between law enforcement and “private sector partners.”

**From:** Stacia Cardille [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Fwd: DSAC Products - 3/1  
**Date:** March 3, 2021 at 8:46 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED] Yoel Roth [REDACTED] Patrick Conlon [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] Jim Baker [REDACTED]

SC

Please see the products the FBI Office of Public Sector just provided to us. Please feel free to share with your teams.

- (U) Russian Malign Influence Use of Permissive Social Media Platforms
- (U//FOUO) Heightened Domestic Violent Extremist Threat to Persist in 2021
- (U) Iranian Influence Efforts Primarily use Online Tools to Target US Audiences, Remain Easily Detectable for Now

Thanks,  
Stacia

33. The ubiquity of the 2016 Russian interference story as stated pretext for building out the censorship machine can't be overstated. It's analogous to how 9/11 inspired the expansion of the security state.

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY



OFFICE of INTELLIGENCE and ANALYSIS

INTELLIGENCE IN BRIEF

3 MARCH 2021

IA-48020-21

FOREIGN INFLUENCE

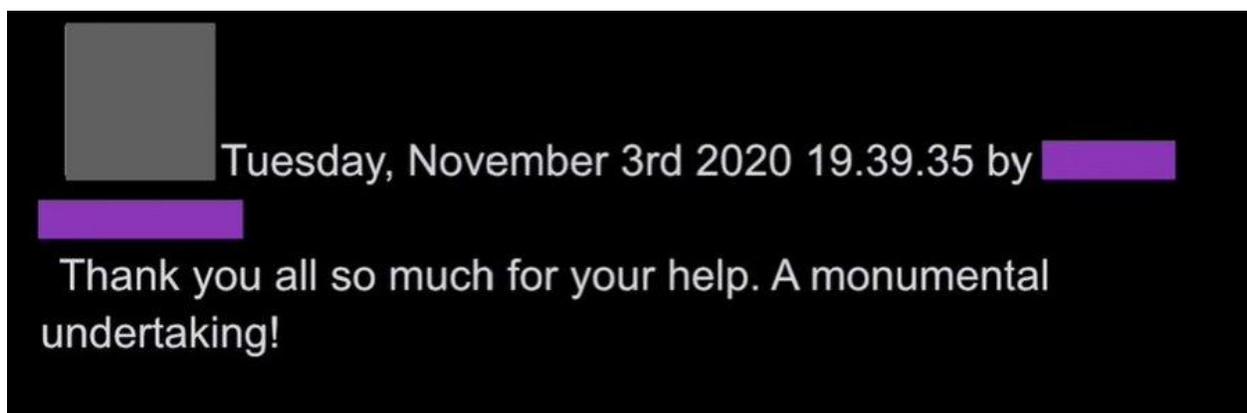
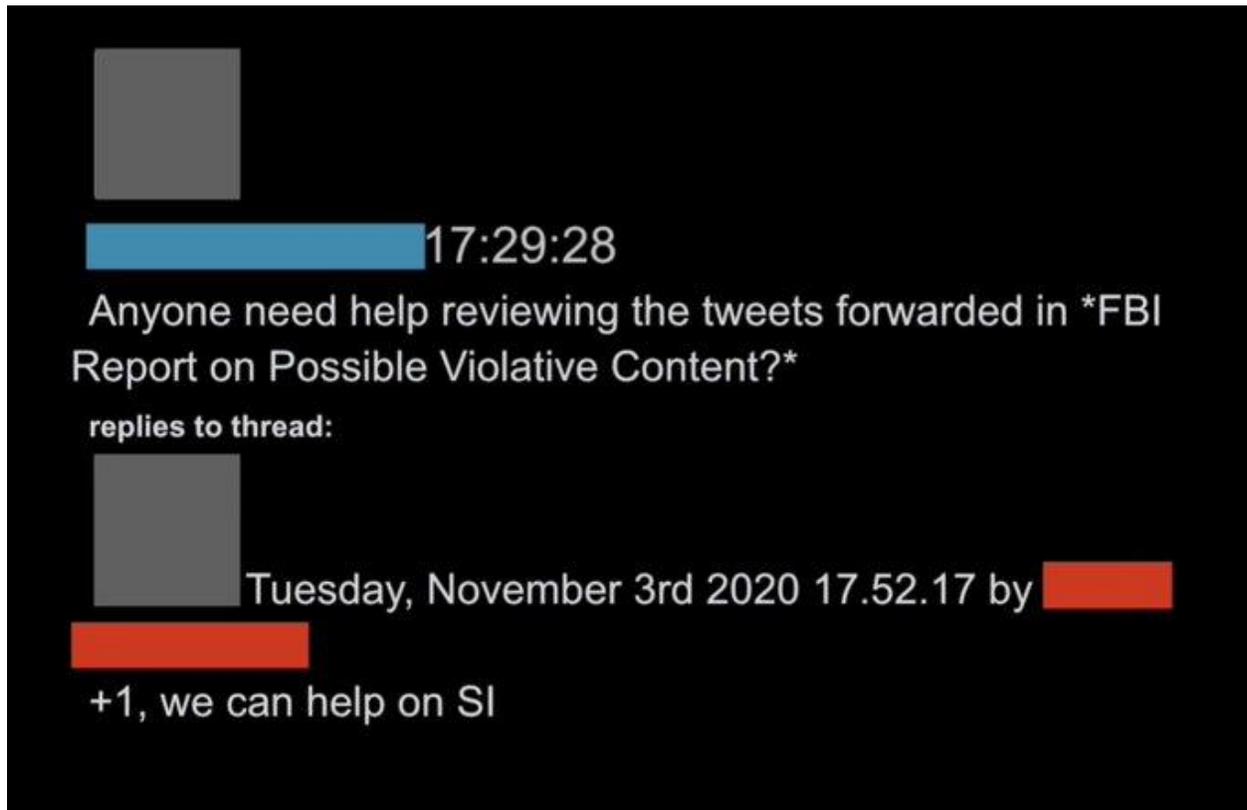
**(U) Russian Malign Influence Use of Permissive Social Media Platforms**

*(U//FOUO) We assess that Russian malign influencers probably will increasingly use US social media platforms that offer more permissive operating environments. We base this assessment on the reduced effectiveness of Russian influence operations on established US social media platforms and current Russian proxy activity on these growing US platforms. Our assessment also is based on the assumption that Russian malign influences see operational advantages in sites with less active effort to ban false information, offensive language, and inauthentic behavior.*

34. While the DHS in its “products” pans “permissive” social media for offering “operational advantages” to Russians, it also explains that the “Domestic Violent Extremist Threat” requires addressing “information gaps”:

- *(U//FOUO) Information gaps and challenges associated with the individualized nature of radicalization could be partially mitigated with increased collaboration between law enforcement, terrorism prevention efforts, and private sector partners. We judge these partnerships would improve our ability to detect changes in DVE trends and provide early warning of potential attacks.*

35. FBI in one case sent over so many “possible violative content” reports, Twitter personnel congratulated each other in Slack for the “monumental undertaking” of reviewing them:



36. There were multiple points of entry into Twitter for government-flagged reports. This letter from Agent Chan to Roth references Teleporter, a platform through which Twitter could receive reports from the FBI:

**From:** Yoel Roth [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: More Information Sharing  
**Date:** October 16, 2020 at 1:53 PM  
**To:** Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI) [REDACTED]@fbi.gov  
**Cc:** Yoel Roth [REDACTED], Stacia Cardille [REDACTED], [REDACTED]



Received.

On Fri, Oct 16, 2020 at 1:44 PM Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI) [REDACTED]@fbi.gov> wrote:

Twitter folks,

I just got something hot off the presses today. Please be on the lookout for a Teleporter message from me with two documents to download. Thanks!

Regards,  
Elvis

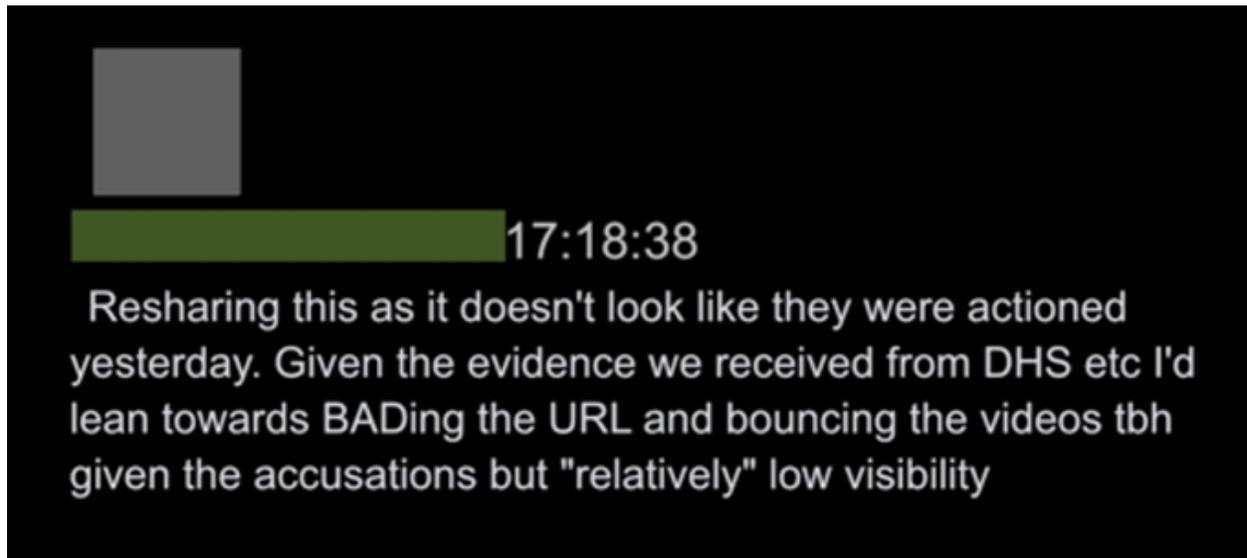
Elvis M. Chan  
Supervisory Special Agent  
Squad CY-1, National Security  
FBI San Francisco

Work: [REDACTED]  
Cell: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]@fbi.gov

---

*This communication contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents or attachments are not to be distributed outside your agency.*

37. Reports also came from different agencies. Here, an employee recommends “bouncing” content based on evidence from “DHS etc”:



38. State governments also flagged content.

39. Twitter for instance received reports via the Partner Support Portal, an outlet created by the Center for Internet Security, a partner organization to the DHS.

40. “WHY WAS NO ACTION TAKEN?” Below, Twitter execs – receiving an alert from California officials, by way of “our partner support portal” – debate whether to act on a Trump tweet:

04:02:36

: Relevant ECs 15004,15104,15360 re public observation From our Voting Law Compliance Handbook: : Jurisdictions count ballots through a detailed process in EC 15100 et seq."Hey Team, the @CASOSvote reported a (<http://sos.ca.gov/elections/publications-and-resources/voting-law-compliance-handbook>) [ [sos.ca.gov/elections/publications-and-resources/voting-law-compliance-handbook](http://sos.ca.gov/elections/publications-and-resources/voting-law-compliance-handbook) by Donald Trump. I have pasted their ask below. They are requesting feedback on the tweet and why Twitter didnt take any action. "Ballots in California are only counted by local elections officials in an open and transparent process. This tweet undermines voters confidence that their votes will be fairly and properly counted. Please see relevant election codes: Relevant ECs 15004,15104,15360 re public observation From our Voting Law Compliance Handbook: <<http://sos.ca.gov/elections/publications-and-resources/voting-law-compliance-handbook>][[sos.ca.gov/elections/publications-and-resources/voting-law-compliance-handbook](http://sos.ca.gov/elections/publications-and-resources/voting-law-compliance-handbook)] I would like to watch how ballots get counted on election night to see how it works. Is this process open to the public? [Please contact your county elections official to ask if there are COVID-19 specific instructions related to elections observers.] Yes. The entire process, from the opening of the vote-by-mail ballot envelopes to the counting of ballots on election night is open to the public. (Elections Code §§ 15004, 15104) Contact your local election official for more information on observing the process on election night. Additionally, to test the accuracy of the counting machines prior to the official certification of election results, each county election official must conduct a public manual count of the ballots cast in one percent of the precincts or a two-part public manual count; the ballots counted are chosen at random by the election official. (Elections Code § 15360) Relevant ECs 15101 re county's as entities who county: Jurisdictions count ballots through a detailed process in EC 15100 et seq."

replies to thread:

Wednesday, October 14th 2020 04.16.39 by [redacted]

To clarify, is their ask for Twitter to review, or to explain why no action was taken upon a previous review?

Wednesday, October 14th 2020 04.18.47 by [redacted]

Why no action was taken? This report came in through our partner support portal



**Donald J. Trump** ✓  
@realDonaldTrump



California hired a pure Sleepy Joe Democrat firm to count and “harvest” votes. No way Republicans get a fair shake. Lawyers, get started!!!  
[@GOPLeader](#) California is in big trouble. Vote Trump and watch the greatest comeback of them all!!! Also, New York and Illinois - go for it!

7:44 AM · Oct 13, 2020

9,741 Retweets   967 Quote Tweets   41.7K Likes



...41. Here, a video was reported by the Election Integrity Project (EIP) at Stanford, apparently on the strength of information from the Center for Internet Security (CIS):

16:39:43

This is a very long and legal-heavy video, but essentially it claims that PA election workers opened the inner envelopes on ballots before election day and called people to correct their ballots prior to election day. According to CIS (escalated via EIP), the video misrepresents 1) PA law, 2) the PA Supreme Court decision, and 3) the affidavits shown in the video (details in the thread). Thoughts on how to handle this one? {<https://twitter.com/tracybeanz/status/1326981600689602561?s=19>}

Friday, November 13th 2020 16.39.55 by

Details from CIS: "The law doesn't prohibit curing, it prohibits curing prior to 7a on Election Day. The author misrepresents this by stating that the officials can't contact voters whereas they can't do so until pre-canvassing starts. The author misrepresents the PASC decision by stating voters are not forbid from curing ballots; PASC simply stated the law didn't require officials to offer an opportunity to cure. On the affidavits, these folks were contacted about having an opportunity to cure a ballot. In none of the examples do the affidavits state that the election official called them and said the voter's specific ballot needed curing. The author of the video misrepresented this and claimed otherwise."

42.If that's confusing, it's because the CIS is a DHS contractor, describes itself as "partners" with the Cyber and Internet Security Agency (CISA) at the DHS:

## Reporting Misinformation to the EI-ISAC

*If you spot misinformation or disinformation about your election jurisdiction on social media, you can submit it to the Election Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center® (EI-ISAC®). We'll work with the platforms and other partners to get it addressed.*

### WHAT TO REPORT

Anything on social media that's about your jurisdiction, pertains to the administration or security of the 2020 general election, and is false. Examples include, but aren't limited to, dates of the election, mail ballot rules, information on ballots, polling place status, and election reporting procedures.

### HOW TO REPORT IT

Send an email to [misinformation@cisecurity.org](mailto:misinformation@cisecurity.org). Copy others in your organization or state whom should also see the information, such as your chief state election official. Include the following information:

- A screenshot of the social media post and, if possible, the URL
- Your name, role, jurisdiction, and official email address
- A description of why this is misinformation. This doesn't

### WHAT WILL HAPPEN

After the EI-ISAC receives your email, we will:

#### 1 Verify the information

We ensure you are a verified election official or their representative, and that you included all the necessary information. If we don't know you, we may contact you or someone else in your office to verify your identity.

#### 2 Forward it to our partners

- a The Cyber and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). They will submit it to the relevant social media platform(s) for review. They may also share it with relevant federal agencies
- b The Election Integrity Partnership at Stanford University. They will analyze the report to see if it is part of a larger disinformation effort.

#### 3 Provide updates

Any time we receive meaningful information about your case, we'll follow up with you. This can be minutes, hours, or days, depending on the platforms and what they discover.

43.The EIP is one of a series of government-affiliated think tanks that mass-review content, a list that also includes the Atlantic Council's Digital Forensics Research Laboratory, and the University of Washington's Center for Informed Policy.

44.The takeaway: what most people think of as the "deep state" is really a tangled collaboration of state agencies, private contractors, and (sometimes state-funded) NGOs. The lines become so blurred as to be meaningless.

45. Twitter Files researchers are moving into a variety of new areas now. Watch [@BariWeiss](#), [@ShellenbergerMD](#), and this space for more, soon.

Matt Taibbi

@mtaibbi

1.THREAD: Twitter Files Supplemental

2. In July of 2020, San Francisco FBI agent Elvis Chan tells Twitter executive Yoel Roth to expect written questions from the Foreign Influence Task Force (FITF), the inter-agency group that deals with cyber threats.

Hi Yoel,

I believe FITF would like a response ahead of our meeting the week of August 10<sup>th</sup>. It can be a written response or we can set up a phone call. Whatever is easiest for you. I think you can tell from the nature of the questions, that there was quite a bit of discussion within the USIC to get clarifications from your company. Let me know how you would like to proceed. Thanks!

Regards,

Elvis

3.The questionnaire authors seem displeased with Twitter for implying, in a July 20th "DHS/ODNI/FBI/Industry briefing," that "you indicated you had not observed much recent activity from official propaganda actors on your platform."

During the 10 June 2020 working group meeting on election security, you indicated you had not observed much recent activity from official propaganda actors on your platform. To make sure we understand the state-media online landscape as much as possible, we hope you would be able to answer some questions about your analysis and conclusions. For context, other sources we are aware of (including those referenced below) indicate state media actors are prolific users of social media, which seems in contrast to your own analysis as we documented it at the time of our discussion. We would appreciate any other information you are willing to provide about your recent conclusions:

- In what ways and by what measures do you see official propaganda actors as less active than other groups on your platform? What groups are you comparing to official propaganda actors?
- What official propaganda actors did you include in your analysis? How do you differentiate official propaganda actors from foreign state actors and what is the reasoning to make that distinction? In which bucket do you place, for example, outlets such as Ruptly or In the NOW, which are part of the state media apparatus but which seek to obscure that link by using different branding? Are they included in your analysis?
- What quantitative metrics do you use to judge volume of activity on your platform? On what scale? Can you provide these metrics?
- What relative weight do you give each metric when judging volume of activity?
- What qualitative measures do you use to inform judgments about activity, including the volume of activity, on your platform?
- How do you limit the scope of your analysis of the domestic, scam, foreign state, official propaganda, and white supremacist actors? (i.e., date range, language, location, topic, etc.)

References:

Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford, "Covid-19 News and Information from State-Backed Outlets Targeting French, German and Spanish-Speaking Social Media Users," 29 June 2020

Foreign Policy Research Institute, "Russia's Narratives about U.S. Election Integrity in 2020," 25 May 2020

Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford, "Coronavirus Coverage by State-Backed English-Language News Sources Understanding Chinese, Iranian, Russian and Turkish Government Media," 8 April 2020

Mercator Institute for China Studies, "Propaganda beyond the Great Firewall," 5 December 2019

Wall Street Journal, "Russia State News Outlet RT Thrives on YouTube, Facebook," 24 October 2017

4. One would think that would be good news. The agencies seemed to feel otherwise.

5. Chan underscored this: "There was quite a bit of discussion within the USIC to get clarifications from your company," he wrote, referring to the United States Intelligence Community.

6. The task force demanded to know how Twitter came to its unpopular conclusion. Oddly, it included a bibliography of public sources - including a Wall Street Journal article - attesting to the prevalence of foreign threats, as if to show Twitter they got it wrong.

7. Roth, receiving the questions, circulated them with other company executives, and complained that he was “frankly perplexed by the requests here, which seem more like something we'd get from a congressional committee than the Bureau.”

*Privileged and Confidential*

Hi team,

The questions we received are attached. I'm frankly perplexed by the requests here, which seem more like something we'd get from a congressional committee than the Bureau. There's a big discussion to be had about state-controlled media, which will be impacted by the label launch later this month — but I'm not particularly comfortable with the Bureau (and by extension the IC) demanding written answers here. What's your perspective on how best to navigate?

Thanks,

Yoel

8. He added he was not “comfortable with the Bureau (and by extension the IC) demanding written answers.” The idea of the FBI acting as conduit for the Intelligence Community is interesting, given that many agencies are barred from domestic operations.

9. He then sent another note internally, saying the premise of the questions was “flawed,” because “we've been clear that official state propaganda is definitely a thing on Twitter.” Note the italics for emphasis.

*Privileged and Confidential*

One other follow-up: In rereading the doc, the entire premise seems flawed. In our June 2020 briefing, we did not indicate that we “had not observed much recent activity from official propaganda actors on your platform.” I re-reviewed my notes from that briefing, and there's a specific item calling out official propaganda outlets as a major factor. And in multiple follow-ups with Elvis and we've been clear that official state propaganda is *definitely a thing on Twitter*, but that it's different in terms of how we handle it than clandestine fake accounts.

My recommendation is to get on the phone with Elvis ASAP and try to straighten this out. I'm concerned that *there's swirl* somewhere in the IC about a statement that may have been fundamentally misunderstood. , would you be ok with me reaching out to Elvis today to try to do that, in advance of more formally engaging with the doc they sent?

Yoel

10. Roth suggested they “get on the phone with Elvis ASAP and try to straighten this out,” to disabuse the agencies of any notion that state propaganda is not a “thing” on Twitter.

11. This exchange is odd among other things because some of the “bibliography” materials cited by the FITF are sourced to intelligence officials, who in turn cited the public sources.

12. The FBI responded to Friday's report by saying it "regularly engages with private sector entities to provide information specific to identified foreign malign influence actors' subversive, undeclared, covert, or criminal activities."



**Jon Nicosia** ✓  
@NewsPolitics



The FBI replies to [@mtaibbi](#) "The FBI regularly engages with private sector entities to provide information specific to identified foreign malign influence actors' subversive, undeclared, covert, or criminal activities. Private sector entities independently make decisions about"

6:30 PM · Dec 16, 2022

789 Retweets 240 Quote Tweets 3,958 Likes

13. That may be true, but we haven't seen that in the documents to date. Instead, we've mostly seen requests for moderation involving low-follower accounts belonging to ordinary Americans – and Billy Baldwin.

14. Watch

[@BariWeiss](#)

and

[@ShellenbergerMD](#)

for more from the Twitter Files.

Continued: Supplemental  
Matt Taibbi  
@mtaibbi · 12m  
"Starting to hear from partners."



The context: January 8th, 2021, a few hours before Trump was banned from the platform.

Pinned Tweet



**Michael Shellenberger**

@ShellenbergerMD · 12h

1. TWITTER FILES: PART 7 The FBI & the Hunter Biden Laptop How the FBI & intelligence community discredited factual information about Hunter Biden's foreign business dealings both after and \*before\* The New York Post revealed the contents of his laptop on October 14, 2020

In Twitter Files #6, we saw the FBI relentlessly seek to exercise influence over Twitter, including over its content, its users, and its data.

<https://twitter.com/mtaibbi/status/1603857534737072128>

In Twitter Files #7, we present evidence pointing to an organized effort by representatives of the intelligence community (IC), aimed at senior executives at news and social media companies, to discredit leaked information about Hunter Biden before and after it was published.

The story begins in December 2019 when a Delaware computer store owner named John Paul (J.P.) Mac Isaac contacts the FBI about a laptop that Hunter Biden had left with him

On Dec 9, 2019, the FBI issues a subpoena for, and takes, Hunter Biden's laptop.

<https://nypost.com/2020/10/14/email-reveals-how-hunter-biden-introduced-ukrainian-biz-man-to-dad/>

**Quote #7469**

Bill To:  
 -Lester Brown  
 200 550 4386  
 lrb@brown.com

Quote covers the MacBook Pro. All other data supplied from 3 hardware items. Hardware data is used when and customer when purchase.

Qty	Item No.	Description	Unit Price	Extension	Total
1	100	Laptop	\$80.00	\$80.00	\$80.00
		<b>Total</b>		<b>\$80.00</b>	<b>\$80.00</b>
		<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>\$80.00</b>	<b>\$80.00</b>

Signature: 

Apple, the Apple logo, and Mac are trademarks of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. © 2019 Apple Inc. All rights reserved. Learn more about us at apple.com. Apple, the Apple logo, and Mac are trademarks of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. © 2019 Apple Inc. All rights reserved. Learn more about us at apple.com. Apple, the Apple logo, and Mac are trademarks of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. © 2019 Apple Inc. All rights reserved. Learn more about us at apple.com.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
 for the  
 District of Columbia

**SUBPOENA TO TESTIFY BEFORE A GRAND JURY**

To:  Case File Number: 

**YOU ARE COMMANDED to appear in the United States District Court at the time, date, and place shown below to testify before the court's grand jury. When you appear, you must remain at the court until the judge or a court officer allows you to leave.**

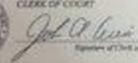
Place: J. Cash Rogers Federal Building  
 Room 3001, 401 King Street  
 Washington, DC 20001

Date and Time:  
 Response Due By: Tuesday, December 11, 2019

You must also bring with you the following documents, electronically stored information, or objects listed in this subpoena:

In lieu of personal appearance, please see ATTACHMENT A.

Date: December 5, 2019

 **CLERK OF COURT**  
  
 Register of Court or Deputy Clerk

The name, address, e-mail, and telephone number of the United States attorney, or assistant United States attorney, who requests this subpoena, are:  
 Lindsey F. Wolf  
 Assistant United States Attorney  
 United States Attorney's Office  
 1717 South Market Street, Suite 400  
 Washington, DC 20004-2646  
 Phone: (202) 725-4272

**ATTACHMENT A**

- Apple MacBook Pro Laptop Computer, Serial Number FV93C2MBIV29
- Western Digital (external hard drive), Serial Number: WX21A18A1993

By Aug 2020, Mac Isaac still had not heard back from the FBI, even though he had discovered evidence of criminal activity. And so he emails Rudy Giuliani, who was under FBI surveillance at the time. In early Oct, Giuliani gives it to [@nypost](#)

<https://nypost.com/2020/10/14/email-reveals-how-hunter-biden-introduced-ukrainian-biz-man-to-dad/>

Shortly before 7 pm ET on October 13, Hunter Biden's lawyer, George Mesires, emails JP Mac Isaac.

Hunter and Mesires had just learned from the New York Post that its story about the laptop would be published the next day.

**From:** "Mesires, George R."  
[REDACTED]

**Date:** October 13, 2020 at 6:58:59 PM EDT  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** George Mesires contact information

John Paul:

Thank you for speaking with me tonight. As I indicated, I am a lawyer for Hunter Biden and I appreciate you reviewing your records on this matter. Thank you.

George

**George R. Mesires**

Partner  
[REDACTED]

**[Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP](#)**

[311 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 4300](#)

[Chicago, Illinois 60606, USA](#)

Welcome to **Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP (Faegre Drinker)** - a new firm comprising the former Faegre Baker Daniels and Drinker Biddle & Reath. Our email addresses have changed with mine noted in the signature block. All phone and fax numbers remain the same. As a top 50 firm that draws on shared values and cultures, our new firm is *designed for clients*.



7. At 9:22 pm ET (6:22 PT), FBI Special Agent Elvis Chan sends 10 documents to Twitter's then-Head of Site Integrity, Yoel Roth, through Teleporter, a one-way communications channel from the FBI to Twitter



Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI)  
Information Sharing

October 13, 2020 at 6:22 PM

To: Yoel Roth, [REDACTED]

Twitter folks,

Heads up I will be sending a Teleporter link for you to download 10 documents. It is not spam! Please confirm receipt when you get it. Thanks.

Regards,

Elvis M. Chan  
Supervisory Special Agent  
Squad CY-1, National Security  
FBI San Francisco



Found in Roth Large Mailbox



Yoel Roth  
Re: Information Sharing

October 13, 2020 at 6:24 PM

To: Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI), Cc: Yoel Roth, [REDACTED] & 1 more

[Details](#)

Received and downloaded - thanks!

[See More](#) from Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI)

8. The next day, October 14, 2020, The New York Post runs its explosive story revealing the business dealings of President Joe Biden's son, Hunter. Every single fact in it was accurate.



9. And yet, within hours, Twitter and other social media companies censor the NY Post article, preventing it from spreading and, more importantly, undermining its credibility in the minds of many Americans.

Why is that? What, exactly, happened?

10. On Dec 2, [@mtaibbi](#) described the debate inside Twitter over its decision to censor a wholly accurate article.

Since then, we have discovered new info that points to an organized effort by the intel community to influence Twitter & other platforms

<https://twitter.com/mtaibbi/status/1598822959866683394>

11. First, it's important to understand that Hunter Biden earned \*tens of millions\* of dollars in contracts with foreign businesses, including ones linked to China's government, for which Hunter offered no real work.

Here's an overview by investigative journalist [@peterschweizer](https://twitter.com/peterschweizer)  
<https://twitter.com/i/status/1604878404486017026>

12. And yet, during all of 2020, the FBI and other law enforcement agencies repeatedly primed Yoel Roth to dismiss reports of Hunter Biden's laptop as a Russian "hack and leak" operation.

This is from a sworn declaration by Roth given in December 2020.

[https://www.fec.gov/files/legal/murs/7827/7827\\_08.pdf](https://www.fec.gov/files/legal/murs/7827/7827_08.pdf)

13. They did the same to Facebook, according to CEO Mark Zuckerberg. "The FBI basically came to us [and] was like, 'Hey... you should be on high alert. We thought that there was a lot of Russian propaganda in 2016 election. There's about to be some kind of dump similar to that.'"

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1604880181906116608>

14. Were the FBI warnings of a Russian hack-and-leak operation relating to Hunter Biden based on \*any\* new intel?

No, they weren't

"Through our investigations, we did not see any similar competing intrusions to what had happened in 2016," admitted FBI agent Elvis Chan in Nov.

1     **toward the 2020 election; is that right?**

2           A.     For these USG-industry meetings, yes.

3           **Q.     Were **hack-and-dump** operations discussed at**  
4 **these meetings, or **hack-and-leak** operations?**

5           A.     Yes, they were.

6           **Q.     Tell me what was discussed about them at**  
7 **these meetings?**

8           A.     The context of **hack and** dump is what was  
9 the FBI **and** CISA doing to prevent **hack-and-dump**  
10 operations. So from the FBI side, I think we  
11 already -- I already relayed to you that we had the  
12 protective voices initiative. I can't remember the  
13 specifics, but CISA also discussed its  
14 cybersecurity awareness efforts as well as grants  
15 efforts with the state-, county- **and** local-level  
16 election officials.

17           **Q.     Did anyone at these meetings tell the**  
18 **industry participants to expect a Russian**  
19 ****hack-and-dump** operation or **hack-and-leak** operation**  
20 **shortly before the 2020 election cycle?**

21           MR. SUR:   Objection; lacks foundation.

22           THE WITNESS:   From my recollection, I  
23 remember that the FBI warned -- that I or someone  
24 from the FBI warned the social media companies  
25 about the potential for a 2016-style DNC

1 MR. SUR: Objection in so far as the  
2 answer calls for the law enforcement privileged  
3 information.

4 You can answer, if you can, without  
5 divulging the law enforcement privilege as to any  
6 particular investigation.

7 THE WITNESS: Through our investigations,  
8 we did not see any similar competing intrusions to  
9 what had happened in 2016.

10 So although from our standpoint we had not  
11 seen anything, we specifically, in an abundance of  
12 caution, warned the companies in case they saw  
13 something that we did not.

14 Q. BY MR. SAUER: So did you ask the  
15 companies if they had seen any attempts at  
16 intrusions or unauthorized access?

17 A. This is something that we -- that I  
18 regularly ask the companies in the course of our  
19 meetings.

20 Q. Did you ask them in these meetings?

21 A. Not at every meeting, but I believe I  
22 asked them at some meetings.

23 Q. And did you repeatedly warn them at these  
24 meetings that you anticipated there might be  
25 hack-and-dump operations, Russian-initiated

1 **hack-and-dump operations?**

2 MR. SUR: Objection; vague, assumes facts  
3 not on the record.

4 THE WITNESS: So repeatedly I would say --  
5 can you -- can you ask your question like -- what  
6 do you mean by "repeatedly"? Like 100 times, five  
7 times?

8 **Q. BY MR. SAUER: Well, did you do it more**  
9 **than once?**

10 A. I did it more -- yes. I warned the  
11 companies about a potential for hack-and-dump  
12 operations from the Russians and the Iranians on  
13 more than one occasion, although I cannot recollect  
14 how many times.

15 **Q. Did anybody else at the FBI talk about**  
16 **hack-and-dump Russian operations?**

17 A. From my recollection, other senior  
18 officials, to include Section Chief Dehmlow, likely  
19 mentioned the possibility of hack-and-dump  
20 operations.

21 **Q. Do you remember Section Chief Dehmlow**  
22 **mentioning it?**

23 A. I said that I believe she mentioned it on  
24 at least one occasion.

25 **Q. What did she say?**

1 hack-and-dump operation.

2 **Q. BY MR. SAUER: What exactly did you say to**  
3 **the social media companies about that?**

4 A. Essentially what I just told you.

5 **Q. You said that there might be a Russian**  
6 **hack-and-dump operation?**

7 A. So what I said was although we have not  
8 seen any computer intrusions into national-level  
9 political committees or election officials or  
10 presidential candidates at this time, we ask you to  
11 remain vigilant about the potential for  
12 hack-and-dump operations, or something to that  
13 effect.

14 **Q. Did you specifically refer to the 2016**  
15 **hack-and-dump operation that targeted the DCCC and**  
16 **the DNC?**

17 A. I believe I did.

18 **Q. Did you provide any basis to the social**  
19 **media platforms for thinking that such an operation**  
20 **might be coming?**

21 A. The basis was -- my basis was it had  
22 happened once, and it could happen again.

23 **Q. Did you have any other specific**  
24 **information other than it had happened four years**  
25 **earlier?**

15. Indeed, Twitter executives \*repeatedly\* reported very little Russian activity.

E.g., on Sept 24, 2020, Twitter told FBI it had removed 345 “largely inactive” accounts “linked to previous coordinated Russian hacking attempts.” They “had little reach & low follower accounts.”

 Update on Russia Accounts  
To: Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI), Cc:  September 24, 2020 at 11:37 AM [Details](#)

Hi Elvis, we hope you are well.

We want to let you know about actions that we plan to publicly announce in the next hour. As you are aware, we are working with you and Facebook to permanently suspend accounts we can reliably attribute to Russia. Thank you for your ongoing cooperation and information sharing.

We are removing two distinct networks of accounts which we can reliably attribute to state-linked entities in Russia. Our investigations are ongoing.

The first network of accounts, totalling approximately 345, were largely inactive, and were linked to previous coordinated Russian hacking attempts. Most of the content shared by these accounts expressed views designed to advance Russia's geopolitical interests.

The second network of accounts, totalling approximately 10, purported to be associated with a website called United World International, which publishes a range of content about current global and US political issues. Links to United World International will be blocked on Twitter under our unsafe links policy detailed here.

The accounts included in this enforcement action [had little reach and low follower counts](#). We plan to send you // FITF relevant account information at the conclusion of our investigation.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Thanks,  


 Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI) September 24, 2020 at 1:33 PM [Details](#)  
RE: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] - [SOCIAL NETWORK] Update on Russia Accounts  
To: 

Excellent! Thanks for the heads up.

Regards,  
Elvis

Elvis M. Chan  
Supervisory Special Agent  
Squad CY-1, National Security  
FBI San Francisco  


This communication contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents or attachments are not to be distributed outside your agency.

16. In fact, Twitter debunked false claims by journalists of foreign influence on its platform

"We haven't seen any evidence to support that claim" by [@oneunderscore\\_\\_](#) @NBC News of foreign-controlled bots.

"Our review thus far shows a small-scale domestic troll effort..."



Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI)

June 2, 2020 at 3:29 PM

Re: [SOCIAL NETWORK] Twitter referral

[Details](#)

To: Yoel Roth, Cc: [REDACTED]

All,

Out of an abundance of caution, I wanted to reach out to you about this news story:

<https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/security/twitter-takes-down-washington-protest-disinformation-bot-behavior-n1221456>

The second part of the article focuses on the #dcblackout campaign and its potential to being driven by foreign-controlled bots. Anything we should be aware of concerning this topic? Thanks.

Regards,  
Elvis

Elvis M. Chan  
Supervisory Special Agent  
Squad CY-1  
San Francisco Division  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
[REDACTED]

[See More from Yoel Roth](#)



Yoel Roth

June 2, 2020 at 3:30 PM

Re: [SOCIAL NETWORK] Twitter referral

[Details](#)

To: Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI), Cc: [REDACTED]

Hi Elvis,

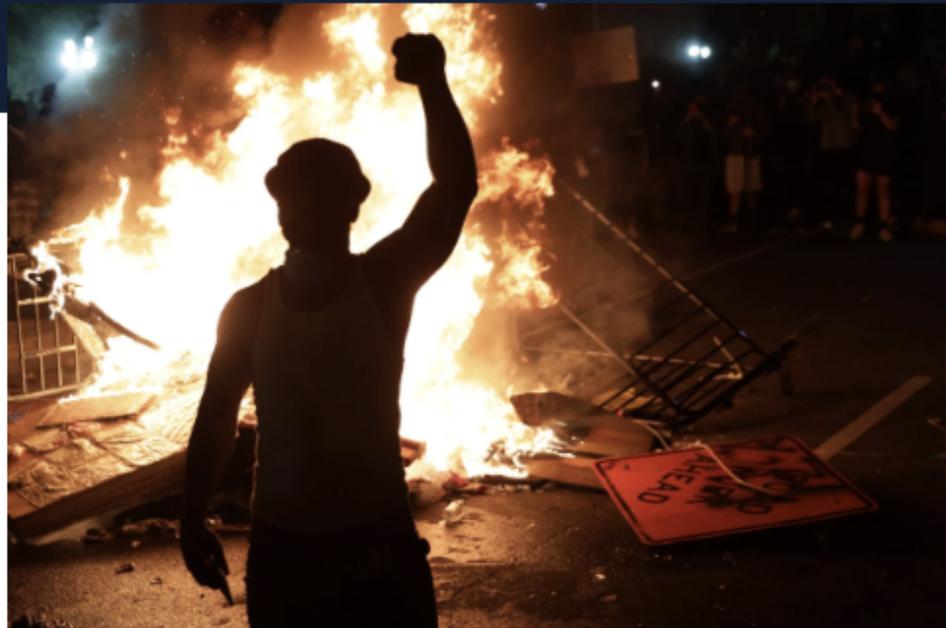
We haven't seen any evidence to support that claim. Our review thus far shows a small-scale domestic troll effort that was amplified in some creative ways by real people - but not a significant bot or foreign angle.

Yoel

AFTER GEORGE FLOYD

# White nationalist group posing as antifa called for violence on Twitter

Other misinformation and misleading claims spread across Twitter on Sunday night and into Monday related to the protests.



— Demonstrators stand around a fire during a protest near the White House on May 31, 2020.

Alex Wong / Getty Images

f t e | SAVE

Create your free profile or log in to save this article

June 1, 2020, 4:03 PM PDT / Updated June 1, 2020, 5:57 PM PDT

By Ben Collins, Brandy Zadrozny and Emmanuelle Saliba

A Twitter account claiming to belong to a national “antifa” organization and pushing violent rhetoric related to ongoing protests has been linked to the white nationalist group Identity Evropa, according to a Twitter spokesperson.

Sponsored Stories by Taboola



STUFF ANSWERED  
Red Flag Symptoms of Psoriasis Most People Are Unaware Of

17. After FBI asks about a WaPo story on alleged foreign influence in a pro-Trump tweet, Twitter's Roth says, "The article makes a lot of insinuations... but we saw no evidence that that was the case here (and in fact, a lot of strong evidence pointing in the other direction)."

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@fbi.gov>

**Sent:** Monday, August 31, 2020 12:08 PM

**To:** Chan, Elvis M. (SF) ([REDACTED])

**Subject:** Twitter Account Inquiry: @WentDemtoRep

Hi Elvis-

I came across the following article in the Washington Post that referenced Twitter's removal of the account @WentDemtoRep due to policy violations: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2020/08/26/race-divisions-highlighted-disinformation-2016/>

According to the article, on the eve of the Republican National Convention, prominent African Americans challenged allegations of racism against President Trump, and retweeted the following message 22,000. Furthermore, the message amassed 39,000 likes within 19 hours after it was posted.

"I've been a Democrat my whole life... I joined the BLM protests months ago when they began. They opened my eyes wide! I didn't realize I became a Marxist. It happened w/o me even knowing it. I'm done with this trash. I'll be registering Republican."

At the time of suspension, was Twitter able to attribute this account and any of its activity to any particular country? In addition, did the aforementioned account, or any other suspended accounts, post similar messages related to the convention/upcoming 2020 US elections? Thank you in advance!

Respectfully,

[REDACTED]

Found in Roth Large Mailbox



Yoel Roth

Re: Twitter Account Inquiry: @WentDemtoRep

To: Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI), Cc: [REDACTED]

August 31, 2020 at 2:15 PM

[Details](#)

Hi Elvis,

Thanks for checking in. I can confirm that the account in question is domestic in origin. The article makes a lot of insinuations about foreign interference - but we saw no evidence that that was the case here (and in fact, a lot of strong evidence pointing in the opposite direction).

Yoel

TECHNOLOGY

# Black voters are being targeted in disinformation campaigns, echoing the 2016 Russian playbook

By Craig Timberg and Isaac Stanley-Becker

August 26, 2020 at 5:21 p.m. EDT



A Facebook post for a group called "Woke Blacks" was part of a Russian campaign in 2016 to discourage minority groups from voting. Race remains a key factor in disinformation campaigns as the 2020 presidential election approaches. (Jon Elswick/AP)

Comment 79 Save Gift Article Share

Four years after Russian operatives used social media in a bid to exacerbate [racial divisions in the United States](#) and suppress Black voter turnout, such tactics have spread across a wide range of deceptive online campaigns operated from numerous nations — including from within the United States itself.

18. It's not the

first time that Twitter's Roth has pushed back against the FBI. In January 2020, Roth resisted FBI efforts to get Twitter to share data outside of the normal search warrant process.

On Fri, Dec 20, 2019 at 1:02 PM Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI) [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi [REDACTED]

My colleagues at the Fort had a query for you. I've provided it to you below:

*A few years ago, Twitter said they would no longer provide their data feed to members of the IC. My colleagues wanted to know if that policy has changed or if you would be willing to change it. My colleagues are currently contracting with a vendor for an analytic tool for open source intelligence (only publicly available data). The commercial version of this tool includes the Twitter data feed. However, the feed was disabled because the vendor said they did not want to violate their terms of service with Twitter. My colleagues are wondering if Twitter would be open to revising its terms of service to allow this vendor to continue having access to the Twitter feed? My colleagues are happy to meet in person to discuss this issue with you if you'd like.*

I hope you have a great holiday season!

Regards,  
Elvis

---

Elvis M. Chan  
Supervisory Special Agent  
Squad CY-1, National Security Cyber  
FBI San Francisco

---

This communication contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents or attachments are not to be distributed outside your agency.



Yoel Roth

Re: OGA Query

To: [REDACTED]

January 7, 2020 at 5:20 PM



---

-Elvis

Hey [REDACTED]

As discussed, here's my suggested response - of course feel free to tweak/edit, but I tried to hit on the major points:

At this point, we don't think a call directly with your colleague at the Fort is the best path forward. As a rule we're not able to directly discuss data licensing relationships with third parties (such as the customers of our data customers), both due to confidentiality reasons and limited information on our end about the business decisions that may have led one of our customers to decline to provide services to the government. We also have a long-standing [policy](#) prohibiting the use of our data products and APIs for surveillance and intelligence-gathering purposes, which we would not deviate from. Ultimately, we want to be good partners to government and help combat our shared threats – but the best path for NSA, or any part of government, to request information about Twitter users or their content is in accordance with valid legal process.

Thanks,

Yoel

19. Pressure had been growing:

“We have seen a sustained (If uncoordinated) effort by the IC [intelligence community] to push us to share more info & change our API policies. They are probing & pushing everywhere they can (including by whispering to congressional staff).”



Carlos Monje

Re: OGA Query

To: Yoel Roth, Cc: [REDACTED]

January 2, 2020 at 11:34 AM

[Details](#)

I def agree with the caution here.

We have seen a sustained (If uncoordinated) effort by the IC to push us to share more information and change our API policies. They are probing and pushing everywhere they can (including by whispering to congressional staff). We should stay connected and keep a solid front against these efforts. My sense from the exchange below is that Elvis is sending a message he was asked to, but that he doesn't feel ownership of it and a polite discussion will suffice to answer the mail here.

Do we know which commercial provider is being referenced here by the clues offered? Do we feel like there is any additional guidance we can give to those companies that could help clarify our rules and minimize their efforts to point back at our API rules when they feel pressure from governments? It seems that DataMinr has gotten that message clearly, but we keep getting additional queries from elsewhere..

[See More from Yoel Roth](#)

--

Carlos Monje Jr.  
Director of Policy & Philanthropy, United States & Canada  
Twitter, Inc.  
@CarlosMonjeJr  
[cmonje@twitter.com](mailto:cmonje@twitter.com)

20. Time and again, FBI asks Twitter for evidence of foreign influence & Twitter responds that they aren't finding anything worth reporting.

"[W]e haven't yet identified activity that we'd typically refer to you (or even flag as interesting in the foreign influence context)."

 Yoel Roth May 31, 2020 at 12:39 PM  
Re: [SOCIAL NETWORK] Re: Current Status [Details](#)  
To: [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED] and team,

We're continuing to closely monitor the situation, and haven't yet seen anything that's in line with Senator Rubio's tweet. We've heard that the tweet may have been based on a miscommunication between the Senate Intelligence Committee staff and Graphika (who they employ for narrative analysis and investigations) – but we haven't gotten any specifics beyond that.

At this stage, my team's findings have largely been that US-based trolling groups are behind some of the on-platform violative activity and misleading information we've seen. While much of this violates our terms of service, we haven't yet identified activity that we'd typically refer to you (or even flag as interesting in the foreign influence context). We're still investigating some of the new developments this morning involving Anonymous (such as #OpDeathEaters, which has been focused on a resurfacing of old Jeffrey Epstein related court documents).

As always, if there's anything you become aware of that might be interesting, please feel free to flag to us. Any source of signal on these issues is much appreciated.

Yoel

 Yoel Roth June 26, 2020 at 8:18 AM  
Re: FW: Possible Terms of Service Violation - Twitter Follow Up [Details](#)  
To: [REDACTED]

Thanks, [REDACTED]

Hi Elvis and team - wanted to briefly follow up on this one following our review. First, I want to apologize for any confusion here; a tooling bug on our end resulted in one of the accounts not being correctly enrolled in our authenticity checks, which is why you saw it stay online even after the others came down. We've fixed the issue.

Beyond that, to the extent the FITF is able to share any information about the sourcing of these accounts – even at a very high level, i.e. sourced from USG information, sourced from researchers outside USG who do not have access to classified information, etc – it would be much appreciated. While the accounts showed some signs of inauthenticity, they weren't so clear-cut on our end that they'd trigger a proactive referral of associated accounts or content to the Bureau. We don't at this time have clear indication that they are foreign in origin. I recognize that the Bureau's ability to share sourcing information in these cases can be constrained; but anything you're able to share that might help further our investigation here could potentially enable additional review and sharing on our side.

Thanks,

Yoel

21. Despite Twitter's pushback, the FBI repeatedly requests information from Twitter that Twitter has already made clear it will not share outside of normal legal channels.

**From:** Yoel Roth <yoel@twitter.com>

**Sent:** Monday, July 13, 2020 11:43 AM

**To:** [REDACTED] (CID) (FBI) <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** [SOCIAL NETWORK] Re: [SOCIAL NETWORK] Re: FW: Possible Terms of Service Violation - Twitter Follow Up

Hey [REDACTED]

Sorry about the delay.

In terms of VOIP usage: Twitter requires people registering an account to confirm either an email address or a phone number. And, in the course of using Twitter, we may require accountholders to confirm a phone number if we detect any indications of suspicious activity originating from their accounts. Several of the phone numbers we observed associated with these accounts appeared to be linked to VOIP phone providers - a relatively common tactic for obtaining phone numbers for the purpose of account confirmation.

As for the VPN information: After consulting with [REDACTED], we would need legal process to provide further information about the IPs, subnets, providers, etc, associated with the authentication IPs from these accounts.

Thanks,

Yoel

On Thu, Jul 9, 2020 at 4:50 PM [REDACTED] (CID) (FBI) <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Hi Yoel-

Thank you again for taking the time to look into this matter; we really appreciate it. When available, I had a few follow up questions I'm hoping you can answer. Based on my understanding, Twitter observed some of the accounts using VPNs and VOIP as a way to obfuscate their online activities. Based on what you're seeing, would you be able to advise how the account holders were using VOIP on Twitter's platform? Also, while I understand obtaining the actual VPN IP addresses associated with the respective accounts would likely require legal process, would Twitter be open to sharing which service provider(s) those VPN IP addresses resolved to?

Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you in advance for your time!

Respectfully,

[REDACTED]  
Counterintelligence Division  
Foreign Influence Task Force - Global Unit  
[REDACTED]

22. Then, in July 2020, the FBI's Elvis Chan arranges for temporary Top Secret security clearances for Twitter executives so that the FBI can share information about threats to the upcoming elections.



Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI)  
Security Clearances

July 15, 2020 at 12:09 PM

To: Yoel Roth, [REDACTED]

All,

Since I brought up the security clearances during our call, I don't think we have anyone at Twitter who has a permanent security clearance. Correct me if I'm wrong. What I would propose is that 30 days out from the election, we get you temporary clearances. You get to pick who they would be. Let me know what you think. Thanks.

Regards,  
Elvis

Elvis M. Chan  
Supervisory Special Agent  
Squad CY-1, National Security  
FBI San Francisco



---

*This communication contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents or attachments are not to be distributed outside your agency.*

23. On August 11, 2020, the FBI's Chan shares information with Twitter's Roth relating to the Russian hacking organization, APT28, through the FBI's secure, one-way communications channel, Teleporter.

 Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI) September 15, 2020 at 5:04 PM  
RE: More Information Sharing  
To: Yoel Roth, 

All,

I've got more information to share with you via Teleporter. You'll see an email from it shortly so you can download the document. Thanks!

Regards,  
Elvis

Elvis M. Chan  
Supervisory Special Agent  
Squad CY-1, National Security  
FBI San Francisco  


*This communication contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents or attachments are not to be distributed outside your agency.*

---

**From:** Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 11, 2020 6:28 PM  
**To:** Yoel Roth <[yoel@twitter.com](mailto:yoel@twitter.com)>;   
**Subject:** Information Sharing

Alcon,

In advance of this week's meeting, I'm going to be sending you three documents through an FBI application called Teleporter. You will get a link from [noreply@teleporter01.org](mailto:noreply@teleporter01.org) which will expire in 24 hours. Please download the documents when you get a chance. The documents will not denote the actors so I'm providing them here: A – FITF topic, B – APT28, C – Sandworm. We will be discussing A & B, but don't have anything additional for C at this point. Thanks.

Regards,  
Elvis

Elvis M. Chan  
Supervisory Special Agent  
Squad CY-1, National Security  
FBI San Francisco  


24. Recently, Yoel Roth told [@karaswisher](#) that he had been primed to think about the Russian hacking group APT28 before news of the Hunter Biden laptop came out.

When it did, Roth said, "It set off every single one of my finely tuned APT28 hack-and-leap campaign alarm bells."

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1604892289800605697>

25. In Aug, 2020, FBI's Chan asks Twitter: does anyone there have top secret clearance? When someone mentions Jim Baker, Chan responds, "I don't know how I forgot him" – an odd claim, given Chan's job is to monitor Twitter, not to mention that they worked together at the FBI

**From:** Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI) <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 26, 2020 2:43 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Dehmlow, Laura E. (CD) (FBI) <[REDACTED]@fbi.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] - [SOCIAL NETWORK] Re: TS Briefing

[REDACTED]

I don't know how I forgot Baker is there now. Yes, he would be perfect. Can you put us in touch with him? We're trying to nail down a date/time to provide the briefing. I'm hoping there will be an unclassified tear line that can be shared as well. Thanks!



Regards,  
Elvis

Elvis M. Chan  
Supervisory Special Agent  
Squad CY-1, National Security  
FBI San Francisco  
Work: 415-553-7605  
Cell: 510-719-6196  
Email: [REDACTED]

*This communication contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents or attachments are not to be distributed outside your agency.*

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 26, 2020 11:40 AM  
**To:** Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI) [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Dehmlow, Laura E. (CD) (FBI) [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL EMAIL] - [SOCIAL NETWORK] Re: TS Briefing

Hi, Elvis! Yes, we have two people. Would Jim Baker work? Let me know.

On Wed, Aug 26, 2020 at 11:35 AM Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI) <emchan@fbi.gov> wrote:

Hi A [REDACTED]

FITF asked us to work with you to identify if there is anyone at Twitter who currently holds a TS clearance so they can get a briefing on something. I was told there might be a recent Twitter hire who still carries a TS clearance. Can you let us know what you think? Thanks!

Regards,



Elvis

1 exactly, but maybe two months ago.

2 **Q. BY MR. SAUER: How often do you talk to**  
3 **her?**

4 A. Maybe on a quarterly basis.

5 **Q. Have you ever discussed with Mr. Strzok or**  
6 **Ms. Page the prospect of a Russian hack-and-leak**  
7 **operation?**

8 A. No. The only investigation that I ever  
9 discussed with either of them was the Yahoo! hack  
10 investigation.

11 **Q. Do you know anyone else associated with**  
12 **the Crossfire Hurricane investigation?**

13 A. No. But I do want to add during those  
14 meetings that I had with Mr. Strzok, Mr. Jim Baker,  
15 who was our general counsel at the time, would  
16 attend some of those meetings as well.

17 **Q. Mr. Baker would attend those meetings that**  
18 **you had with Mr. Strzok about the Yahoo! hack?**

19 A. Yes. At least some of them.

20 **Q. Who else would attend those meetings?**

21 A. Just the three of them. It would be the  
22 three of them getting a status update from -- they  
23 would be getting a case update from me.

24 **Q. A case update about the Yahoo!**  
25 **investigation?**

26. Who is Jim Baker? He's former general counsel of the FBI (2014-18) & one of the most powerful men in the U.S. intel community.

Baker has moved in and out of government for 30 years, serving stints at CNN, Bridgewater (a \$140 billion asset management firm) and Brookings

## Jim Baker

---

### SUMMARY AND OBJECTIVES

Effective, adaptive, and values-driven senior executive with extensive leadership, management, legal, policy, media, and teaching experience in several world-class organizations in the public, private, and educational sectors. Seeking opportunities with a dynamic and impactful organization facing a range of complex and demanding challenges. Experience includes:

- Substantial private sector legal experience in the tech/social media, telecom, and financial sectors.
- Former chief legal officer of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), a global national security and law enforcement agency with 36,000 employees and a \$8.7 billion budget.
- Reputation as "one of the most trusted, longest-serving national security officials in the [U.S.] government." *The Washington Post*, December 21, 2017.
- Inspirational leader of several large organizations facing numerous hard challenges.
- Reliable partner for senior management teams in high-impact and high-stress operational environments.
- Strategic thinker and innovative problem-solver in a broad range of substantive areas.
- Proven ability to develop and maintain productive relationships with key stakeholders.
- Dedicated mentor and coach focused on recruiting and retaining high-performers.
- A leading legal and policy expert on technology, privacy, cybersecurity, and surveillance.
- Substantial legislative experience, including numerous appearances before the U.S. Congress.
- Effective internal and external communicator with significant public speaking experience.
- A leader who values and promotes diversity and inclusion.
- Senior Executive Service (SES) member in the U.S. federal government for 14 years.

---

### PROFESSIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

**Deputy General Counsel and Vice President, Legal**  
Twitter, Inc., San Francisco, California

**June 2020-Present**

Provide legal advice regarding litigation, law enforcement, national security, content moderation and enforcement, public policy, and human rights matters globally for a prominent social media company. Lead a worldwide team of 300 trust and safety professionals who address voluminous and time sensitive law enforcement requests and copyright/trademark matters. Regularly advise the board of directors, CEO, chief legal officer, and general counsel on a wide range of highly complex and critical matters.

**Member, Board of Directors**  
enable, Inc., Boston, Massachusetts

**February 2020-Present**

Serve as a member of the board of directors of an artificial intelligence/machine learning start-up in the productivity enhancement space.

**Principal** **May 2018-Present**  
JKV Advisors, LLC, Takoma Park, Maryland

Provide strategic advisory services to technology sector companies confronting difficult security, cybersecurity, and privacy risk issues.

**Policy Director** **January 2019-June 2020**  
The R Street Institute, Washington, D.C.

Served as Director of National Security and Cybersecurity at a non-partisan, non-profit center-right think tank. Supervised a team of senior fellows and fellows who researched, published and engaged with policymakers and others on a wide range of national security and cybersecurity policy issues.

**Legal Analyst** **June 2019-May 2020**  
CNN, Washington, D.C.

Provided on-air legal analysis regarding a range of topics and the news of the day.

**Senior Strategic Advisor** **January 2018-May 2018**  
Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Washington, D.C.

Served as a senior FBI leader providing executive levels of the organization with strategic management advice regarding a variety of technology and innovation projects, including cybersecurity, artificial intelligence and machine learning initiatives, digital transformation, improving the FBI's technology procurement process, and encryption.

**General Counsel** **January 2014-January 2018**  
Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Washington, D.C.

Led the FBI's legal team regarding a wide range of highly challenging national security, law enforcement, and litigation issues, including the Hillary Clinton email investigation, the investigation of Russian efforts to influence the 2016 U.S. presidential election, and high-profile encryption litigation involving Apple, Inc. Consistently provided senior FBI leaders with sound advice on risk management, crisis management, and organizational strategy. Accomplishments include:

- Successfully supervised all legal affairs of the nation's premier national security and law enforcement agency, including counterterrorism, counterintelligence, cyber, criminal, science and technology, privacy and civil liberties, government contracting, and employment law, as well as all aspects of civil litigation (including eDiscovery)
- Led FBI's Office of General Counsel, with 300 employees (including 200 attorneys)
- Program Manager for FBI's Chief Division Counsel Program through which an additional 125 attorneys provide legal advice and services to the FBI's 56 field offices
- Improved significantly the FBI's relationship with the technology sector post-Snowden disclosures
- Led the FBI's cross-functional team (legal, policy, legislative, and public affairs) responsible for supporting the Executive Branch's successful efforts to renew Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act
- Developed and implemented the first-ever comprehensive reorganization of the Office of General Counsel based on sound management principles and analysis

**Associate General Counsel**  
Bridgewater Associates, LP, Westport, Connecticut

**February 2012-January 2014**

Provided legal advice on intellectual property matters to the world's largest and most successful hedge fund in a highly demanding environment. Specific accomplishments are confidential.

**Associate Deputy Attorney General**  
United States Department of Justice  
Office of the Deputy Attorney General, Washington, D.C.

**July 2009-October 2011**

Supervised the Department's national security portfolio on behalf of the Deputy Attorney General regarding intelligence, cyber, surveillance, rule of law, export control, and other sensitive and high-risk matters. Accomplishments include:

- Led Department's cross-functional team responsible for national security and law enforcement cyber law and policy
- Represented the Deputy Attorney General at numerous meetings of the Deputies Committee of the National Security Council (NSC) and other interagency meetings
- Supervised the Department's legal activities in Iraq and Afghanistan
- Testified before Congress on numerous occasions regarding cybersecurity, electronic surveillance and privacy, emergency preparedness, and treaty matters

**Assistant General Counsel for National Security**  
Verizon Business, Ashburn, Virginia

**April 2008-July 2009**

Provided legal and policy advice on a variety of national security, law enforcement, privacy, and cybersecurity issues, as well as matters regarding the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA). Accomplishments include:

- Developed highly effective working relationships with internal business clients that operated various sophisticated technologies, including the internet backbone, and provided cybersecurity products and services to internal and external customers
- Assisted internal clients with identifying, understanding, and mitigating legal and reputational risk consistent with business objectives

**Counsel for Intelligence Policy**  
United States Department of Justice  
National Security Division, Office of Intelligence Policy and Review, Washington, D.C.

**May 2001-October 2007**

Led a Department of Justice component with 125 employees (100 attorneys) and an annual budget of \$31 million. Responsible for development, coordination, and implementation of Department policy with regard to intelligence, counterintelligence, and other national security matters. Advised the Attorney General and other Department leaders on such matters. Led the organization through numerous challenges, including 9/11 and its aftermath. Accomplishments include:

- Conducted robust and effective oversight of U.S. Intelligence Community activities

- Evaluated Departmental activities and existing and proposed foreign intelligence and counterintelligence activities of the FBI, NSA, and other Intelligence Community members to determine their consistency with intelligence law and policies
- Responsible for representing the United States on all matters before the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) Court, including supervising all attorneys appearing before the court and the preparation of all FISA applications
- Supervised the Office's legislative activities, including appearing before congressional committees numerous times, and its response to oversight bodies (such as Congress, the Inspector General, and the 9/11 Commission)

**Deputy Counsel for Intelligence Operations** **April 1998-May 2001**  
 United States Department of Justice  
 Office of Intelligence Policy and Review, Washington, D.C.

Led Department's legal team responsible for preparation of all FISA applications; advised Department leadership on national security and related oversight matters; conducted oversight of Intelligence Community; extensive dealings with Congress.

**Attorney Advisor** **October 1996-April 1998**  
 United States Department of Justice  
 Office of Intelligence Policy and Review, Washington, D.C.

Line attorney position representing the United States before the FISA Court on numerous counterintelligence and international terrorism matters. Conducted oversight of the FBI and other U.S. Intelligence Community members.

**Trial Attorney** **November 1990-October 1996**  
 United States Department of Justice  
 Criminal Division, Fraud Section, Washington, D.C.

Line federal prosecutor handling numerous complex international fraud cases, including Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) violations, at grand jury, trial, and appeal stages.

**Federal Judicial Law Clerk** **June 1988-October 1990**  
 Honorable Bernard A. Friedman  
 U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, Detroit, Michigan

---

#### AWARDS AND HONORS

- National Intelligence Meritorious Unit Citation for the Reauthorization of Section 702 of FISA (2018)
  - Justice Department's Edmund J. Randolph Award for Outstanding Service (2007) (Justice Department's highest award)
  - National Security Agency (NSA) Director's Distinguished Service Medal (2007)
  - NSA's Intelligence Under Law Award (2007)
  - U.S. Intelligence Community Award for Excellence in Counterterrorism (2006)
  - Presidential Rank Meritorious Executive Award (2003)
  - Attorney General's Honors Program (1990)
- 

---

#### TEACHING AND FELLOWSHIPS

**Lecturer on Law** **2007-2009 and 2011-Present**  
 Harvard Law School, Cambridge, Massachusetts

**Visiting Fellow, Governance Program** **May 2018-January 2019**  
 Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C.

**Distinguished Visiting Fellow** **May 2018-January 2019**  
 Lawfare Institute, Washington, D.C.

**Fellow** **January-May 2007**  
 Institute of Politics, John F. Kennedy School of Government  
 Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts

27. As general counsel of the FBI, Baker played a central role in making the case internally for an investigation of Donald Trump

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/fbi-took-michael-sussmanns-allegation-of-trump-russia-ties-seriously-former-official-testifies-11652985514>

28. Baker wasn't the only senior FBI exec. involved in the Trump investigation to go to Twitter.

Dawn Burton, the former dep. chief of staff to FBI head James Comey, who initiated the investigation of Trump, joined Twitter in 2019 as director of strategy.

29. As of 2020, there were so many former FBI employees – "Bu alumni" – working at Twitter that they had created their own private Slack channel and a crib sheet to onboard new FBI arrivals

 **Matthew Williams** June 15, 2020 at 5:29 PM  
Welcome!!  
To: jbaker@twitter.com, Dawn Burton

Hey Jim!!

So excited you are here. I am no longer the newest Bu alum :)

Here is the "Bu to Twitter" translation chart I mentioned. Adding Dawn so she can add/correct.

Again, welcome! Super pumped to work with you again!

Matt

Thing	Bureau	Twitter
Climate Survey	AES	Pulse
Intranet Homepage	Red side Homepage	Birdhouse
Team/Topic Sites	FBI SharePoint Sites	Confluence
Internal Academy	Virtual Academy	go/learning
Expense Tool	TRIP	Concur
Personnel Tool	EPAS/HR Source	Workday
401k	TSP	Vanguard
Payroll	NFC	ADP
Critical Announcements	DENS	Everbridge
Short Summary	BLUF (bottom-line up front)	TL:DR (too long, didn't read)

30. Efforts continued to influence Twitter's Yoel Roth.

In Sept 2020, Roth participated in an Aspen Institute "tabletop exercise" on a potential "Hack-and-Dump" operation relating to Hunter Biden

The goal was to shape how the media covered it – and how social media carried it

CONFIDENTIAL

Aspen Digital Hack-and-Dump Working Group — September 2020

EXERCISE :: The Burisma Leak

**Day One: Monday, October 5<sup>th</sup>**

- Anonymous website, BIDENCRIMES.info, and a Twitter account, @HUNTERLOLZ, begin posting documents that purport to be from Burisma, tied to Hunter Biden. Splashed across the top of the site, in English, is “Joe Biden betrayed america before for \$\$\$\$. He’ll do it again.” Initially, the documents, mostly in Ukrainian, appear to be minutes of various Burisma board meetings, internal emails, and financial records. There is initially no sign of a smoking gun.
  - NOTE: The website appears to have been first registered in 2016. No ownership information is public. The Twitter account was created in 2014, oddly just before Hunter joined the Burisma board. It has tweeted once and follows one person.

**Day Two: Tuesday, October 6<sup>th</sup>**

- The Drudge Report links to the anonymous website, BIDENCRIMES.info, and the site is quickly picked up by other fringe media and begins to spread on social media sites.

**Day Three: Wednesday, October 7<sup>th</sup>**

- *Fox & Friends* discusses BIDENCRIMES.info in its 7 a.m. block. @RealDonaldTrump tweets six minutes later, “Is Joe Biden biggest criminal of all time? Check out @HUNTERLOLZ.”
- Three reporters (Dina Temple-Rason, Donie O’Sullivan, and Ellen Nakashima) are contacted by an anonymous ProtonMail account, [BIDENCRIMES@protonmail.com](mailto:BIDENCRIMES@protonmail.com), and each sent a different document. None of the documents have appeared on the public website. They are each told they are the only reporter receiving a specific document.
  - Dina’s document purports to be a ledger of payments showing that Hunter Biden was paid \$3 million over two months in 2015 by Burisma, far more than had been reported publicly before.
  - Donie’s document is a 2016 email, purportedly from Hunter to his father, dated the evening before the firing of prosecutor Viktor Shokin, simply titled “Burisma,” and the body of which reads: “I really need you to do this for me.”
  - Ellen’s document purports to be the board contract between Burisma and Hunter.
- In Ukraine, Burisma announces that it has no evidence of any hack of its servers, disavows all files as forgeries.

#### Day Four: Thursday, October 8<sup>th</sup>

- The Biden campaign, adopting the policy of Hillary Clinton's campaign in 2016 and the Macron campaign, says they will not confirm the veracity of any documents.
- CrowdStrike announces, without further detail, it has reason to believe that BIDENCRIMES.info is the work of Fancy Bear (APT 28).
- CNN's Jim Scuitto reports an anonymous Cloudflare executive who says that he doubts the CrowdStrike appraisal; Cloudflare believes that no foreign actor is involved and has evidence that BIDENLEAKS.info is being hosted and run by Americans.
- At 4 p.m., the *Washington Post* publishes a story by Ellen Nakashima confirming that the Burisma board contract given to her is legitimate; there is no wrongdoing evident or alleged in the document, but Burisma sources confirm the document is real.
- Cesar Conde, the chairman of NBC News, announces that because of the suspicion that the BIDENCRIMES.info leaks are coming from a foreign power with a goal of undermining America's free and fair elections, no aspect of NBC News or MSNBC will report on the allegations or use the materials as the basis for reporting. In his statement, carried live on the evening news with Lester Holt, he asks all other news organizations to follow NBC's leadership. The Guardian quickly announces it will follow the same principle, as does The Huffington Post.
- At Ohio Trump rally that night, crowd starts chanting "LOCK HIM UP." President Trump, at podium, pumps his fists as the crowd chants.

#### Day Five: Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup>

- In a statement released at 9 a.m. and signed only by him, Director of National Intelligence John Ratcliffe says he has no reason to believe the documents posted by BIDENCRIMES.info are forgeries, nor does the IC have reason to believe the website is a Russian operation.
- At 11 a.m., on the House floor, House Intelligence Chair Adam Schiff says that according to his briefings, the IC is not being forthright with the American people about the source and veracity of the leaks.
- Also at 11 a.m., Mandiant releases a short statement saying it has traced the source of BIDENLEAKS.info to infrastructure consistent with China's Ministry of State Security.

- At 2 p.m., @HUNTERLOLZ tweets a link out to a .zip file that appears to contain a new tranche of 20,000 documents, mostly in Ukrainian, stolen from Burisma and posted on BIDENCRIMES.info.
- All but simultaneously, at 2:01 p.m., @DonaldJTrumpJr, @TeamTrump, and @parscale all retweet the @HUNTERLOLZ post.
- By 3 p.m., Twitter determines that the hosting service for the .zip tweeted by @HUNTERLOLZ traces back to a server in Hong Kong.
- That afternoon, Facebook's sources inside the IC tell Facebook to be wary about the DNI's statement.
- At 5 p.m., Dina Temple-Raston airs an NPR story saying that she has confirmed the \$3 million payment document she received is fake.

#### **Day Six: Saturday, October 10<sup>th</sup>**

- Overnight, progressive blogger Josh Marshall notices and tweets out one document in the new tranche of .zip files that appears to be a confirmation of a wire transfer for \$1 million from Deutsche Bank to an off-shore account in the name of Hunter Biden, dated two days after the firing of the chief prosecutor, Shokin. Overnight, independent security researchers and news organizations find the majority of the .zip files are authentic, but some are manipulated. First Draft News tweets an hour after Josh's tweet that his document appears to be an authentic Burisma document but has been edited—what was edited is unclear.
- At 10 a.m., the *New York Times* posts a story saying that two anonymous "senior Justice Department officials" in Washington say that the acting U.S. attorney in D.C. has empaneled a grand jury to investigate Joe Biden.

#### **Day Seven: Sunday, October 11<sup>th</sup>**

- On the Sunday shows, Biden campaign staff dismiss the entire hack-and-leak as dirty tricks by Vladimir Putin.
- After the morning shows air, *The Daily Beast* quotes two "former senior intelligence officials" that the directors of the CIA and NSA refused to sign onto Ratcliffe's Friday statement, although sources differ why they did not sign it. David Sanger matches that reporting an hour later.
- Alex Berenson announces on Twitter that he's conducted an interview, via DM, with the person behind @HUNTERLOLZ and that he believes the person is an American.

### **Day Eight: Monday, October 12<sup>th</sup>**

- At 7:15 a.m., President Trump calls into *Fox & Friends* and says he hopes the FBI will investigate Joe Biden.
- At 9 a.m., Attorney General Bill Barr holds a press conference to say the American people deserve the truth and that he has instructed the FBI to verify the allegations of Joe Biden and Hunter Biden's corruption. He announces that the Justice Department is investigating wrongdoing by Hunter Biden and Joe Biden for money laundering, tax fraud, theft of honest services, and acting as an unregistered foreign agent. In response to a reporter's question, he volunteers that he believes Joe Biden should submit to an FBI interview within days.
- At 11 a.m., Senator Richard Blumenthal says the American people are being lied to and demands in a CNN interview, "Paul Nakasone, Gina Haspel, and Chris Wray owe Americans the truth. I can't say more than that."
- At 2 p.m., Jim Comey tweets "FBI agents tell me they are being silenced about the truth. Donald Trump is illegally coordinating with Putin. He must resign."
- At 7:30 p.m., Rudy Giuliani says on Fox News that he was right all along re: 2019 Ukraine pressure campaign.

### **Day Nine: Tuesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>**

- @realDonaldTrump tweets at 6:15 a.m.: "See, Ukraine phone call was perfect — I knew Sleepy Joe was actually Crooked Joe! Tell FBI: LOCK HIM UP!"

### **Day Ten: Wednesday, October 14<sup>th</sup>**

- Rep. Devin Nunes, Sen. Tom Cotton, and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announce they will travel immediately to Kiev to get Burisma's cooperation with the unfolding investigation. They depart that night on an official US government jet.

### **Day Eleven: Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup>**

- The second presidential debate

Bidencrimes.info 17 letters,

31. The organizer was Vivian Schiller, the fmr CEO of NPR, fmr head of news at Twitter; fmr Gen. mgr of NY Times; fmr Chief Digital Officer of NBC News

Attendees included Meta/FB's head of security policy and the top nat. sec. reporters for [@nytimes](#) [@wapo](#) and others



Garrett Graff

October 17, 2020 at 4:44 AM

Stephen was right!

To: Janine Zacharia, Vivian Schiller, Nathaniel Gleicher, Yoel Roth, Olga Belogolova, [claire@firstdraftnews.com](mailto:claire@firstdraftnews.com), [david.e.sanger@gmail.com](mailto:david.e.sanger@gmail.com), Nakashima, Ellen, Davis, Rick, Andrew James Grotto, David McCraw, Noah Shachtman

[Hide](#)

32. By mid-Sept, 2020, Chan & Roth had set up an encrypted messaging network so employees from FBI & Twitter could communicate.

They also agree to create a “virtual war room” for “all the [Internet] industry plus FBI and ODNI” [Office of the Director of National Intelligence].

From: Yoel Roth <yoel@twitter.com>  
Sent: Monday, September 21, 2020 04:32 PM  
To: Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI) [REDACTED]  
Cc: Yoel Roth <yoel@twitter.com> [REDACTED]  
Subject: [SOCIAL NETWORK] Re: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] - [SOCIAL NETWORK] Re: Election Communication Platform

Hey Elvis,

Apologies for the delayed responses. Notes on your 3 questions are below - happy to find time this week, or we can check in briefly on Friday's call.

**1. What USG agencies will be allowed on the channel? I think the easy ones will be FBI, DHS/CISA, and ODNI. For your awareness, State/GEC, NSA, and CIA have expressed interest in being allowed on in listen mode only. Welcome your thoughts on this.**

The agreed-upon parameters for the channel (by industry) are that it's one-way communication **from** government **to** industry. We explicitly do not plan to have conversation/discussion/responses back in this forum. So the USG attendees there I think would largely be driven by who FBI wants to share information with in this setting. I will note, given at least some of the orgs on this list (e.g. State/GEC) have been somewhat more press-happy than others, I worry a bit about whether information shared in confidence with industry could result in announcements being made which disrupt our operational work. Put another way, there might be value in keeping the circle of trust here quite small. I also worry about the precedent of expanding it to include organizations which aren't typically present in our meetings. I'm also not entirely sure that every member of that group wants their phone number *quite so broadly available*. And, finally, I'd need to run this by the industry group again - they only agreed to FBI. Happy to do so if you think there's value, but I'm thinking it might be simpler to keep it to industry/FBI.

**2. How many USG participants will be allowed onto the channel? Will it only be people that industry already knows? I ask because at the FBI SF command center, there will be three other supervisors working shifts when I'm not there. I also know different FITF personnel will be rotating through the command post at FBIHQ.**

We didn't get into the specifics of this, but I can't imagine any of that would be problematic.

**3. When will the channel be activated and for how long?**

We discussed the election period, broadly defined. Probably not indefinitely, but keeping it going at minimum through January seems reasonable.



Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI)  
Re: [SOCIAL NETWORK] Re: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] - [SOCIAL NETWORK] Re: Election Communication Platform  
To: Yoel Roth, Cc: [REDACTED]

Roth Large September 21, 2020 at 8:48 PM

[Details](#)

Hi Yoel,

Thanks for the response. I have some additional questions regarding them. I am aware the industry is meeting about this on Friday so you may not have any clarification until then. We can discuss during and after our scheduled meeting depending on what your schedule looks like.

1. If it will only be one-way communication from the USG to the industry, it seems like it should at least be FBI and CISA. We can give you everything we're seeing from the FBI and USIC agencies. CISA will know what is going on in each state via the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN).

However, how will the industry partners communicate back with the FBI and CISA? For the FBI, will you use the pre-established channels already in use? For example, you or Angela will email me directly.

If that is the case, that will work for the FBI, but I don't know what communication channels you have with CISA. Or will the industry partners rely on the FBI to be the belly button for the USG? We can do that as well. We just need to know the industry group's preference.

2. Sounds good. We will likely only establish one Signal channel for FBI San Francisco and one for FBIHQ. The FITF unit chiefs may want to be on the channel as well. I will provide the companies with our command post shift roster so you know who is on shift for any given day.

3. Facebook had mentioned activating the Signal channel before the first presidential debate, which works for us, but we won't have the enhanced staffing levels until October 28th at FBIHQ and October 30th at FBI San Francisco. I don't think we will stay in enhanced posture through January so I think we would revert back to the standard channels sometime in November, perhaps after the elections are certified.

Regards,  
Elvis

Elvis M. Chan  
Supervisory Special Agent  
Squad CY-1  
San Francisco Division  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
[REDACTED]

33. Then, on Sept 15, 2020 the FBI's Laura Dehmlow, who heads up the Foreign Influence Task Force, and Elvis Chan, request to give a classified briefing for Jim Baker, without any other Twitter staff, such as Yoel Roth, present.

 Jim Baker FBI Emails September 15, 2020 at 6:13 PM  
Re: [SOCIAL NETWORK] Re: [SOCIAL NETWORK] Re: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] - [SOCIAL N...  
To: Dehmlow, Laura E. (CD) (FBI), Jim Baker,  [Details](#)

Hi Jim and 

I hope all is well. , can you help Laura Dehmlow and Elvis Chan of the FBI schedule a classified briefing for Jim? They would like to meet early next week if possible.

Thank you!

34. On Oct 14, shortly after @NYPost publishes its Hunter Biden laptop story, Roth says, "it isn't clearly violative of our Hacked Materials Policy, nor is it clearly in violation of anything else," but adds, "this feels a lot like a somewhat subtle leak operation."

 Yoel Roth October 14, 2020 at 8:51 AM  
Re: [for your awareness] New York Post Article / Action from FB [Details](#)  
To:  & 6 more

Hey 

Thanks - we're aware of this and are tracking closely. At this time, given the alleged provenance of the materials (a laptop mysteriously dropped off at repair shop in Delaware), it isn't clearly violative of our Hacked Materials Policy, nor is it clearly in violation of anything else. That said, the questionable origins here are obviously causing a lot of people to make references to 2016 - and my personal view on this, unsubstantiated by hard evidence as yet, is that this feels a lot like a somewhat subtle leak operation. We'll be developing a recommendation for what, if anything, we want to do over the course of the day today.

Yoel

35. In response to Roth, Baker repeatedly insists that the Hunter Biden materials were either faked, hacked, or both, and a violation of Twitter policy. Baker does so over email, and in a Google doc, on October 14 and 15th.



**Jim Baker**

October 14, 2020 at 9:26 AM

Re: [for your awareness] New York Post Article / Action from FB

To: Yoel Roth, Cc: [REDACTED] & 11 more

[Details](#)

One additional comment--I've seen some reliable cybersecurity folks question the authenticity of the emails in another way (i.e., that there is no metadata pertaining to them that has been released and the formatting looks like they could be complete fabrications).

[See More from Yoel Roth](#)

**From:** Jim Baker [jbaker@twitter.com](mailto:jbaker@twitter.com)  
**Subject:** New NYPost Article  
**Date:** October 15, 2020 at 3:44 AM

**To:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [Vijaya Gadde vijaya@twitter.com](mailto:Vijaya.Gadde@twitter.com), [Yoel Roth yoel@twitter.com](mailto:Yoel.Roth@twitter.com)

JB

Folks,

I'm guessing that we are going to restrict access to this article as a violation of our Hacked Materials policy but after yesterday I don't want to assume anything.

<https://nypost.com/2020/10/15/emails-reveal-how-hunter-biden-tried-to-cash-in-big-with-chinese-firm/>

Jim Baker, [REDACTED], and 1 other added comments to the following document

2020-10-14 NYPost Hunter Biden Laptop Article - PRIVILEGED AND...

New

2 comments

### Comments

our teams continue to investigate the origins of the material included in the reporting.



[REDACTED]

I'm struggling to understand the policy basis for marking this as unsafe, and I think the best explainability argument for this externally would be that we're waiting to understand if this story is the result of hacked materials. We'll face hard questions on this if we don't have some kind of solid reasoning for marking the link unsafe.



Trenton Kennedy

cc: @yoel@twitter.com @sommerse@twitter.com @j...



[REDACTED]

Will we also mark similar stories as unsafe?

<https://www.foxnews.com/politics/hunter-biden-emails-senate-homeland-security-committee-investigating-hard-drive-laptop>



Yoel Roth

The policy basis is hacked materials - though, as discussed, this is an emerging situation where the facts remain unclear. Given the SEVERE risks here and lessons of 2016, we're erring on the side of including a warning and preventing this content from being amplified.



Vijaya Gadde

What is the warning that will come up?



Yoel Roth

When you click the link, you'll see the generic unsafe URL message (references spam, malware, and violations of the Twitter Rules) - not ideal, but it's the only thing we have



[REDACTED]

Whatever we do in the comms (this will become a bias claim for Jack pre-hearing immediately), let's make it clear we're proactively but cautiously interpreting this through the lens of our hacked materials policy and allowing the link with a warning and significant reduction of spread.



[REDACTED]

To Ian's point, can we truthfully claim that this is part of the policy? i.e. As part of our approach to addressing potentially hacked materials, we are limiting visibility of related stories on Twitter while our investigation is ongoing.



Jim Baker New

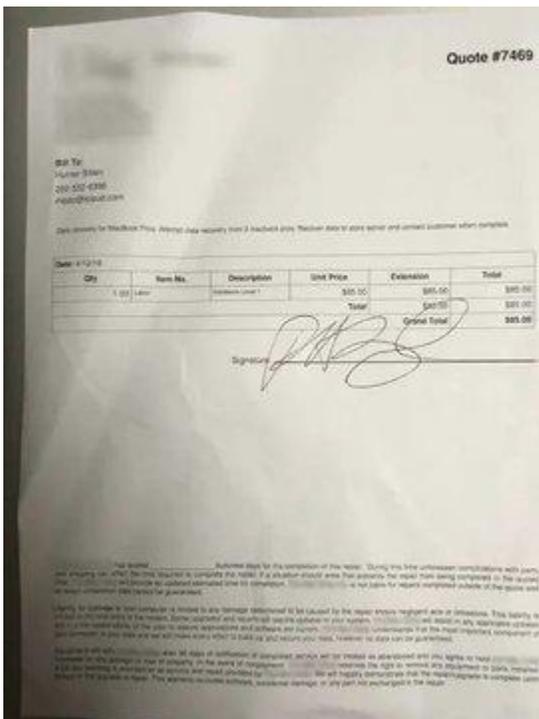
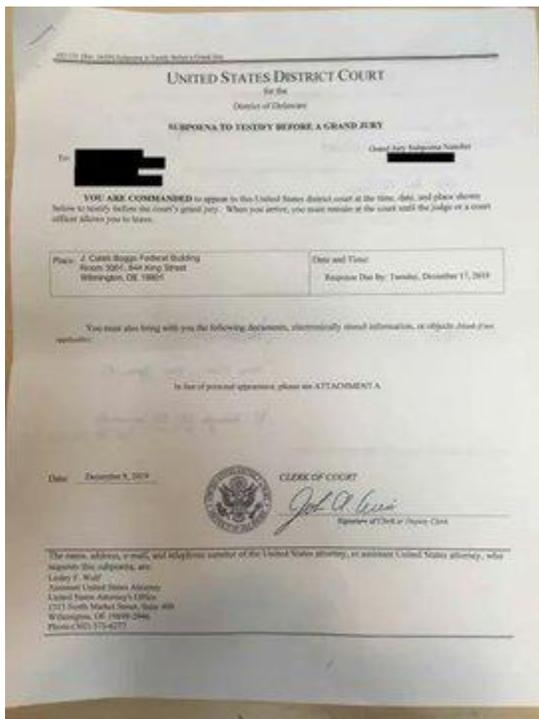
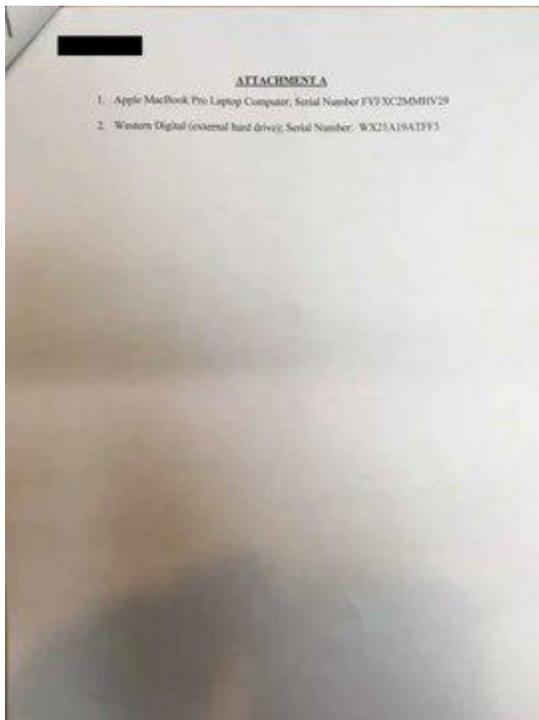
[PRIVILEGED AND CONFIDENTIAL]

I support the conclusion that we need more facts to assess whether the materials were hacked. At this stage, however, it is reasonable for us to assume that they may have been and that caution is warranted. There are some facts that indicate that the materials may have been hacked, while there are others indicating that the computer was either abandoned and/or the owner consented to allow the repair shop to access it for at least some purposes. We simply need more information.

Reply

Open

36. And yet it's inconceivable Baker believed the Hunter Biden emails were either fake or hacked. The @nypost had included a picture of the receipt signed by Hunter Biden, and an FBI subpoena showed that the agency had taken possession of the laptop in December 2019.



37. As for the FBI, it likely would have taken a few \*hours\* for it to confirm that the laptop had belonged to Hunter Biden. Indeed, it only took a few days for journalist [@peterschweizer](https://twitter.com/peterschweizer) to prove it.  
<https://twitter.com/i/status/1604903049339604994>

38. By 10 am, Twitter execs had bought into a wild hack-and-dump story

“The suggestion from experts - which rings true - is there was a hack that happened separately, and they loaded the hacked materials on the laptop that magically appeared at a repair shop in Delaware”



Yoel Roth

October 14, 2020 at 10:12 AM

Re: [for your awareness] New York Post Article / Action from FB

To: [REDACTED], SCALE Legal Cc: & 15 more

[Details](#)

[REDACTED] [+SCALE Legal](#) as well

Hi folks,

Lots of good discussion of this case in the doc. Sharing a bit of additional context about why we're recommending this action:

The key factor informing our approach is consensus from experts monitoring election security and disinformation that this looks a lot like a hack-and-leak that learned from the 2016 Wikileaks approach and our policy changes. The suggestion from experts - which rings true - is there was a hack that happened separately, and they loaded the hacked materials on the laptop that magically appeared at a repair shop in Delaware (and was *coincidentally* reviewed in a very invasive way by someone who *coincidentally* then handed the materials to Rudy Giuliani). Given the severe risks we saw in this space in 2016, we're recommending a warning + deamplification pending further information.

If additional information emerges that establishes the origins of the materials more conclusively, we could either reverse this action and remove the warning, or escalate our enforcement (should it cross the line fully into hacked materials).

We recognize that the product experience of the warning label is less than ideal, and will surface that feedback with the Experience team again as evidence for why we need more robust URL management options.

Based on a discussion with Vijaya, we'll move forward with this action once we get signoff from comms.

Yoel

38. By 10 am, Twitter execs had bought into a wild hack-and-dump story

“The suggestion from experts - which rings true - is there was a hack that happened separately, and they loaded the hacked materials on the laptop that magically appeared at a repair shop in Delaware”



**Perry, Matthew J. (OGC) (FBI)**

📁 Jim...BI Emails

October 14, 2020 at 3:38 PM

Jim/Matt

To: Jim Baker



Mail  
Attachment.ics  
1 KB

40. The influence operation persuaded Twitter execs that the Hunter Biden laptop did \*not\* come from a whistleblower.

One linked to a Hill article, based on a WaPo article, from Oct 15, which falsely suggested that Giuliani's leak of the laptop had something to do with Russia.

**From:** Nick Pickles <npickles@twitter.com>  
**Subject:** Re: PRIVILEGED - Hacked Materials updates source-of-truth  
**Date:** October 16, 2020 at 10:26 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]

NP

The current policy is anchored in "attempts to compromise or infiltrate computer systems for malicious purposes" - we'd have to be feeling pretty vindictive to say whistleblowers or dissidents were malicious.

Plus isn't the issue with whistleblowers data theft rather than hacking (hence Snowden was charged under the Espionage Act vs Assange charged under Computer Fraud and Abuse Act?).

This does point to the question of whether we should have a factor in the policy relating to proximity and relevance to critical civic events informing our enforcement, which would protect something of dubious provenance but with public interest (eg [Fintel files](#)).

(I'd also note the seemingly well-timed [briefings from Govt](#) sources highlighting concerns about the source of the hard drive, which would support an assessment that it's neither whistleblower or dissident content.)

Thanks  
Nick

On Fri, 16 Oct 2020 at 11:02, [REDACTED] wrote:

I think this is intended to not only protect media reporting but whistleblowers and dissidents so as not to silence those voices ...

On Fri, Oct 16, 2020 at 12:38 PM Nick Pickles <npickles@twitter.com> wrote:

Adding [REDACTED]

At a high level, I'm still struggling to understand how we've gone from a narrow issue about how to scope the policy around media reporting, to a far broader roll back of our approach to hacked materials. Labelling something that looks and smells like a hostile attempt to interfere in an election feels like we're dodging a pretty fundamental question about how we protect the public conversation, for the sake of appeasing a vocal political group who at this point seem willing to accept the fruits of foreign interference to help their own political fortunes.

Flagging this piece in [Just Security](#) this morning, "Of the available options, the platforms

Just In...

White House says it is preparing for a possible second round of coronavirus fight

Lawmaker says it is possible to hold a public hearing

The reality of capital gains in 2021

Market predicted that 7.5% could be lost for 2021

'Vendetta' video gains attention

NATIONAL SECURITY

# Intelligence officials warned Trump that Giuliani was target of Russian influence campaign: report

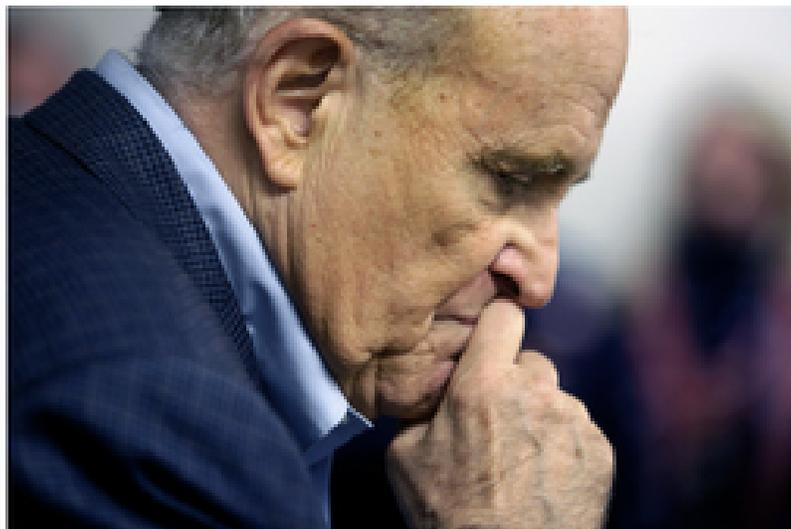
RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN TO MISINFORM (7)



The Washington Post  
Democracy Dies in Darkness

## White House was warned Giuliani was target of Russian intelligence operation to feed misinformation to Trump

By Shane Harris, Ellen Nakashima, Greg Miller and Josh Dawsey  
October 15, 2020 at 7:55 p.m. EDT



Former New York mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani pauses while addressing Trump supporters on Oct. 12, 2020, during a Columbus Day gathering at a Trump-campaign field office in Philadelphia. (Jacqueline Lanza/AP)

Comment 3822 Save Gift Article Share

U.S. intelligence agencies warned the White House last year that President Trump's personal lawyer Rudolph W. Giuliani was the target of an influence operation by Russian intelligence, according to four former officials familiar with the matter.



41. There is evidence that FBI agents have warned elected officials of foreign influence with the primary goal of leaking the information to the news media. This is a political dirty trick used to create the perception of impropriety.

42. In 2020, the FBI gave a briefing to Senator Grassley and Johnson, claiming evidence of "Russian interference" into their investigation of Hunter Biden.

The briefing angered the Senators, who say it was done to discredit their investigation.

[https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley\\_johnson\\_to\\_fbi\\_-\\_august\\_2020\\_briefing.pdf](https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley_johnson_to_fbi_-_august_2020_briefing.pdf)

43. "The unnecessary FBI briefing provided the Democrats and liberal media the vehicle to spread their false narrative that our work advanced Russian disinformation."

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 25, 2022

## VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

Ms. Nikki Floris  
Intelligence Analyst in Charge  
Intelligence Division, Washington Field Office  
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Mr. Bradley Benavides  
Deputy Assistant Director  
Counterintelligence Division  
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Dear Ms. Floris and Mr. Benavides:

On August 6, 2020, as we were finishing our September 23, 2020, report on Hunter Biden's financial connections to foreign governments and questionable foreign nationals, you provided a briefing to us on behalf of the FBI and Intelligence Community.<sup>1</sup> As we have publicly and privately stated to you and Director Wray since that briefing, the briefing was unnecessary and was only done because of pressure from our Democratic colleagues, including Democratic Leadership, to falsely attack our Biden investigation as advancing Russian disinformation.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Chairman Charles Grassley, S. Comm. on Fin., and Chairman Ron Johnson, S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. and Governmental Aff. *Hunter Biden, Burisma, and Corruption: The Impact on U.S. Government Policy and Related Concerns*, (Sept. 23, 2020) <https://www.finance.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/HSGAC%20-%20Finance%20Joint%20Report%202020.09.23.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Chairman Charles Grassley, S. Comm. on Fin., and Chairman Ron Johnson, S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. and Governmental Aff., to Ranking Member Ron Wyden, S. Comm. on Fin., and Ranking Member Gary Peters, S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. and Governmental Aff. (July 28, 2020); Press Release, Sen. Charles E. Grassley, Sen. Ron Johnson, Denounce Democrat Disinformation Campaign In Response To Peters, Wyden, Democrat Leaders' Letters (July 28, 2020), <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/news-releases/johnson-grassley-denounce-democrat-disinformation-campaign-response-peters-wyden>; Press Release, Sen. Charles E. Grassley, Grassley (Again) Rejects Democrats' Baseless Claims About Burisma Probe (Sept. 16, 2020), <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/news-releases/grassley-again-rejects-democrats-baseless-claims-about-burisma-probe>; Floor Speech, Sen. Charles E. Grassley, Grassley On The Ukraine Investigation (Sept. 29, 2020), <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/news-releases/grassley-ukraine-investigation>; Floor Speech, Sen. Charles E. Grassley, Grassley On Democrats Spreading Disinformation To Protect President Biden (Mar. 18, 2021), <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/news-releases/grassley-on-democrats-spreading-disinformation-to-protect-president-biden>; Floor Speech, Sen. Charles E. Grassley, The Media Again Takes Liberal Disinformation Bait On Biden Family Oversight (May 11, 2021), <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/remarks/the-media-again-takes-liberal-disinformation-bait-on-biden-family-oversight>; Letter from Sen. Charles E. Grassley, and Sen. Ron Johnson to Inspector General Horowitz (July 20, 2021), [https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley\\_johnson\\_to\\_justice\\_dept\\_inspectorgeneralaugust2020briefing.pdf](https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley_johnson_to_justice_dept_inspectorgeneralaugust2020briefing.pdf).

For example, on July 13, 2020, then-Minority Leader Schumer, Senator Warner, Speaker Pelosi and Representative Schiff sent a letter, with a classified attachment, to the FBI to express a purported belief that Congress was the subject of a foreign disinformation campaign.<sup>3</sup> The classified attachment included unclassified elements that, among other things, attempted – and failed – to tie our investigation into the Biden family’s financial deals to foreign disinformation. Those elements were then leaked to the press.<sup>4</sup> As you are undoubtedly aware, we’ve successfully refuted those false allegations and, most recently, we’ve made public a series of authentic bank records relating to the Biden family’s connections to the communist Chinese government, which Democrats had previously tried – and failed – to claim advanced Russian disinformation.<sup>5</sup>

In addition, on July 16, 2020, then-Ranking Member Peters and then-Ranking Member Wyden wrote to us requesting a briefing from the FBI’s Foreign Influence Task Force on matters purportedly relating to our investigation.<sup>6</sup> On July 28, 2020, we responded to them and reminded them that in March 2020, the FBI and relevant members of the Intelligence Community had already briefed our committees and provided assurances that there was no reason that our committees should not continue their investigation.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, the FBI succumbed to the Democratic pressure and provided the infamous August 6, 2020, briefing.

With respect to the substance of the briefing, it consisted primarily of information that we already knew and information unconnected to our Biden investigation. We made clear to you at the briefing that it was not relevant to the substance of our work. In response, you stated that the FBI is not attempting to “quash, curtail, or interfere” in the investigation in any

<sup>3</sup> Letter from Minority Leader Charles Schumer, Vice Chairman Mark Warner, S. Select Comm. on Intelligence, Speaker Nancy Pelosi, and Chairman Adam Schiff, H. Select Comm. on Intelligence, to Fed. Bureau of Investigation (July 13, 2020), [https://intelligence.house.gov/uploadedfiles/20200713\\_big\\_4\\_letter\\_to\\_fbi\\_director\\_wray\\_-\\_defensive\\_briefing\\_signed.pdf](https://intelligence.house.gov/uploadedfiles/20200713_big_4_letter_to_fbi_director_wray_-_defensive_briefing_signed.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Natasha Bertrand, Andrew Desiderio, and Kyle Cheney, *Democrats: Packets sent to Trump allies are Part of Foreign Plot to Damage Biden*, POLITICO (July 23, 2020), [foreign-plot-to-damage-biden-380217](https://www.politico.com/news/2020/07/23/democrats-packets-sent-to-trump-allies-are-part-of-foreign-plot-to-damage-biden-380217); As the Ranking Members have repeatedly said, they and their staff have not received, relied upon, or solicited information from Derkach.

<sup>5</sup> Floor Speech, Sen. Charles E. Grassley, Sen Ron Johnson Discuss Investigation into Biden Family Foreign Financial Entanglements - Part I (Mar. 28, 2022) <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/remarks/grassley-johnson-discuss-investigation-into-biden-family-foreign-financial-entanglements-part-i>; see also Floor Speech, Sen. Charles E. Grassley, Sen Ron Johnson Release Bank Records Tying Biden Family to CCP-Linked Individuals & Companies (Mar. 29, 2022), <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/remarks/grassley-johnson-release-bank-records-tying-biden-family-to-ccp-linked-individuals-and-companies>; Floor Speech, Sen. Charles E. Grassley, Sen. Ron Johnson, The Biden Family Investigation – Part III: James Biden (Apr. 5, 2022) <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/remarks/the-biden-family-investigation-part-iii-james-biden>.

<sup>6</sup> Letter from Ranking Member Ron Wyden, S. Comm. on Fin., and Ranking Member Gary Peters, S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. and Governmental Aff., to Chairman Grassley, S. Comm. on Fin., and Chairman Ron Johnson, S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. and Governmental Aff. (July 16, 2020),

[https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/200716\\_Letter\\_PetersWyden\\_IntelligenceBriefingRequest.pdf](https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/200716_Letter_PetersWyden_IntelligenceBriefingRequest.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> Letter from Chairman Charles Grassley, S. Comm. on Fin., and Chairman Ron Johnson, S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. and Governmental Aff., to Ranking Member Ron Wyden, S. Comm. on Fin., and Ranking Member Gary Peters, S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. and Governmental Aff. (July 28, 2020).

way.<sup>8</sup> We also made clear our concern that the briefing would be subject to a leak that would shed a false light on the focus of our investigation. Indeed, on May 1, 2021, the Washington Post did exactly that and so did the other inaccurate media articles during the course of our investigation which falsely labeled our investigation as advancing Russian disinformation.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, whistleblowers have recently alleged that in August 2020, the same month you provided the briefing to us, FBI officials initiated a scheme to downplay derogatory information on Hunter Biden for the purpose of shutting down investigative activity relating to his potential criminal exposure by labeling it “disinformation.”<sup>10</sup> Whistleblowers have also alleged that local FBI leadership instructed employees not to look at the Hunter Biden laptop immediately after the FBI had obtained it.<sup>11</sup>

At the briefing as well as after, we requested relevant records relating to what happened at the briefing, including the 302 or similar summary, the intelligence basis for the briefing and the personnel involved in making the decision to brief us. On August 12, 2020; May 3, 2021; July 25, 2022; and August 11, 2022, those requests were made.<sup>12</sup> The FBI has consistently failed to respond in full to each request and failed to provide those critical records which casts further doubt on the true purpose for the briefing.

Simply put, the unnecessary FBI briefing provided the Democrats and liberal media the vehicle to spread their false narrative that our work advanced Russian disinformation. Although you stated that the FBI didn’t intend to “interfere” in our investigation, the practical effect of such an unnecessary briefing and the subsequent leaks relating to it created interference, which frustrated and obstructed congressional oversight efforts.

<sup>8</sup> S. Rep., Hunter Biden, Burisma, and Corruption: The Impact on U.S. Government Policy and Related Concerns, S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. and Governmental Aff. and S. Comm. on Fin., 116TH CONG. (2020) at 59, [https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/HSGAC\\_Finance\\_Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/HSGAC_Finance_Report_FINAL.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> Ellen Nakashima, Shane Harris and Tom Hamburger, *FBI was aware of prominent Americans, including Giuliani, were targeted by Russian influence operation*, The Washington Post (May 1, 2021), [https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/rudy-giuliani-fbi-warning-russia/2021/04/29/5db90f96-a84e-11eb-bca5-048b2759a489\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/rudy-giuliani-fbi-warning-russia/2021/04/29/5db90f96-a84e-11eb-bca5-048b2759a489_story.html); See Natasha Bertrand, Kyle Cheney, and Andrew Desiderio, *Dem leaders demand FBI briefing on 'foreign interference campaign' targeting lawmakers*, POLITICO (July 20, 2020), <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/07/20/democrats-fbi-briefing-foreign-interference-campaign-373134>.

<sup>10</sup> Press Release, Sen. Charles E. Grassley, *Whistleblowers' Reports Reveal Double Standard In Pursuit of Politically Charged Investigations By Senior FBI, DOJ Officials* (July 25, 2022), <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/news-releases/whistleblowers-reports-reveal-double-standard-in-pursuit-of-politically-charged-investigations-by-senior-fbi-doj-officials>.

<sup>11</sup> Letter from Sen. Ron Johnson, to Justice Department Inspector General Michael Horowitz (Aug. 23, 2022) <https://www.ronjohnson.senate.gov/services/files/7CD44E16-BF0B-495E-8B87-900467F69E50>.

<sup>12</sup> Letter from Chairman Charles Grassley, S. Comm. on Fin., to Attorney General Garland and Director Wray (Aug. 12, 2020) [https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley\\_to\\_justice\\_deptfbibriefing.pdf](https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley_to_justice_deptfbibriefing.pdf); Letter from Chairman Charles Grassley, S. Comm. on Fin., and Chairman Ron Johnson, S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. and Governmental Aff., to Director Wray and Director Avril Haines (May 3, 2021) [https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley\\_johnson\\_to\\_fbi\\_odni\\_-\\_briefing.pdf](https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley_johnson_to_fbi_odni_-_briefing.pdf); Letter from Ranking Member Charles Grassley to Attorney General Garland and Director Wray (July 25, 2022) [https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley\\_to\\_justice\\_deptfbipoliticalbiasfollowup.pdf](https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley_to_justice_deptfbipoliticalbiasfollowup.pdf); Ranking Member Charles Grassley, *Questions for the Record - FBI Oversight Hearing* (Aug. 11, 2022) [https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/fbi\\_oversight\\_hearing\\_questions\\_for\\_the\\_record\\_-\\_senator\\_grassley.pdf](https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/fbi_oversight_hearing_questions_for_the_record_-_senator_grassley.pdf).

The FBI answers to Congress and the American people; therefore, we request that you appear before us for a transcribed interview on these and related matters no later than September 8, 2022. In addition, at the time of our initial request in August 2020, all records relating to the briefing should have been preserved.<sup>13</sup> This letter reiterates that request.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Judiciary



Ron Johnson  
Ranking Member  
Permanent Subcommittee  
on Investigations

cc: The Honorable Richard Durbin  
Chairman  
Committee on the Judiciary

The Honorable Jon Ossoff  
Chairman  
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

The Honorable Michael Horowitz  
Inspector General  
Department of Justice

44. Notably, then-FBI General Counsel Jim Baker was investigated \*twice,\* in 2017 and 2019, for leaking information to the news media.

“You’re saying he’s under criminal investigation? That’s why you’re not letting him answer?” Meadows asked.

“Yes”

<https://www.politico.com/story/2019/01/15/fbi-general-counsel-criminal-investigation-1101774>

45. In the end, the FBI's influence campaign aimed at executives at news media, Twitter, & other social media companies worked: they censored & discredited the Hunter Biden laptop story.

By Dec. 2020, Baker and his colleagues even sent a note of thanks to the FBI for its work.



46. The FBI's influence campaign may have been helped by the fact that it was paying Twitter millions of dollars for its staff time.

“I am happy to report we have collected \$3,415,323 since October 2019!” reports an associate of Jim Baker in early 2021.

Run the business - we made money!

[Details](#)

To: Jim Baker, Cc: Sean Edgett

Jim, FYI, in 2019 SCALE instituted a reimbursement program for our legal process response from the FBI. Prior to the start of the program, Twitter chose not to collect under this statutory right of reimbursement for the time spent processing requests from the FBI.

I am happy to report we have collected \$3,415,323 since October 2019! This money is used by LP for things like the TTR and other LE-related projects (LE training, tooling, etc.).

--



Safety, Content, & Law Enforcement (SCALE)

47. And the pressure from the FBI on social media platforms continues

In Aug 2022, Twitter execs prepared for a meeting with the FBI, whose goal was "to convince us to produce on more FBI EDRs"

EDRs are an "emergency disclosure request," a warrantless search.

From: [REDACTED]  
Subject: Advance read-out on 9/6 meeting with FBI  
Date: August 25, 2022 at 1:58 PM  
To: [REDACTED]

AL

Team:

I had an advanced prep call today with [REDACTED] of the FBI for your 9/6 meeting with them. Here are some key takeaways:

- Attending on the FBI side will be [REDACTED], plus people from NTOC and perhaps others from violent crimes at HQ.
- Their goal in the meeting is to convince us to produce on more FBI EDRs.
- They will try and do this by having NTOC educate us on the threats they are seeing, their procedures and processes for responding to tips, and what their standards are for when they seek EDRs.
- They plan on bringing statistics on our rate of compliance, which they labeled variable, and several "forehead knockers" (i.e. situations where in the FBI view there is no reason why we would not have complied).
- They repeatedly emphasized Twitter's lower level of compliance in comparison with other platforms. I, kindly, emphasized back that repeatedly stressing that to our team is not going to be a good strategy to move the needle in their direction.

These bullets make it seem like this will be a confrontational meeting, which I do not think it will be. Instead, I get the feeling they are genuinely baffled and frustrated that their "rate of success" (as they say) is so low at Twitter.

On our side, I think it could be helpful to have some statistics at our fingertips about how the FBI has far and away a greater rate of production than anyone else (I assume this is true). It might also be helpful to get a sense of the reasons we are denying their requests. Matt suggested that it was our high requirement of imminence (which is the narrative I expect his team will push), so it would be interesting to see if that's actually the issue, or if it's something else.

I realize no one has time to do anything extra, so these are just nice to haves, not must haves. You all are perfectly fine to just go into the meeting and listen and say thanks so much for your input and leave. But if you have interest in countering their version of the facts, it would probably be helpful to do a little digging on our side.

Thanks so much,

[REDACTED]

In response to the Twitter Files revelation of high-level FBI agents at Twitter, [@Jim\\_Jordan](#) said, "I have concerns about whether the government was running a misinformation operation on We the People."

<https://nypost.com/2022/12/17/twitter-leadership-full-of-former-fbi-agents-linkedin-records-show/>

Anyone who reads the Twitter Files, regardless of their political orientation, should share those concerns.

/END



**Lee Fang**

@lhfang

1. TWITTER FILES PART 8 \*How Twitter Quietly Aided the Pentagon's Covert Online PsyOp Campaign\* Despite promises to shut down covert state-run propaganda networks, Twitter docs show that the social media giant directly assisted the U.S. military's influence operations.

2. Twitter has claimed for years that they make concerted efforts to detect & thwart gov-backed platform manipulation. Here is Twitter testifying to Congress about its pledge to rapidly identify and shut down all state-backed covert information operations & deceptive propaganda.

**C. *State-Backed Information Operations***

Combatting attempts to interfere in conversations on Twitter remains a top priority for the company, and we continue to invest heavily in our detection, disruption, and transparency efforts related to state-backed information operations. Our goal is to remove bad faith actors and to advance public understanding of these critical topics.

Twitter defines state-backed information operations as coordinated platform manipulation efforts that can be attributed with a high degree of confidence to state-affiliated actors. State-backed information operations are typically associated with misleading, deceptive, and spammy behavior. These behaviors differentiate coordinated manipulative behavior from legitimate speech on behalf of individuals and political parties.

Whenever we identify inauthentic activity on Twitter that meets our definition of an information operation, and which we are able to confidently attribute to actors associated with a government, we share comprehensive data about this activity.

3. But behind the scenes, Twitter gave approval & special protection to the U.S. military's online psychological influence ops. Despite knowledge that Pentagon propaganda accounts used covert identities, Twitter did not suspend many for around 2 years or more. Some remain active.

4. In 2017, a U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) official sent Twitter a list of 52 Arab language accounts "we use to amplify certain messages." The official asked for priority service for six accounts, verification for one & "whitelist" abilities for the others.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Kahler, Nathaniel B CTR CENTCOM CCJ3 (US)**  
Date: Wed, Jul 26, 2017 at 1:39 PM  
Subject: RE: [Non-DoD Source] Re: Twitter at SOCOM  
To: [twitter.com](mailto:twitter.com)>

[@mail.mil](mailto:twitter.com)>

Thanks sure is tough to do web ops when you can't Tweet!

I've attached a list; the first 6 on the list are our priority accounts. Ideally, we could have them verified (blue check mark) and "whitelisted" (if there is such a thing?) – one of them, @yemencurrent, is currently not indexing. @Justice\_AR currently has a request in for Verification but haven't heard anything.

The rest are accounts we use to amplify certain messages – ideally, they could be "whitelisted" as well. Again, if it's too big an ask, the first 6 are the priority. If you need any sort of paperwork or verification from our office or SOCOM, please just let me know.

Also, our SOCOM guys mentioned that they'd love to be able to come and meet up for a face-to-face to talk if you think the right Twitter folks would be in for it?

5. The same day CENTCOM sent the list, Twitter officials used a tool to grant a special “whitelist” tag that essentially provides verification status to the accounts w/o the blue check, meaning they are exempt from spam/abuse flags, more visible/likely to trend on hashtags.

6. The CENTCOM accounts on the list tweeted frequently about U.S. military priorities in the Middle East, including promoting anti-Iran messages, promotion of the Saudi Arabia-U.S. backed war in Yemen, and “accurate” U.S. drone strikes that claimed to only hit terrorists.



الحدث اليمني @yemencurrent · Mar 14, 2017

عاجل:

حزرموت جنوب اليمن.

Translate from Arabic



1



الحدث اليمني  
@yemencurrent

بدون طيار تستهدف سيارة تابعة لـ **#القاعدة** و أخبار تفيد بمقتل "أبو جندل الحضرمي" و "أبو هاشم الشروري" في الضربة الجوية بمنطقة العبر في **#حزرموت**





مكتشف  
@mktashif

Follow

مقاتلات التحالف العربي بقيادة المملكة العربية السعودية تجدد غاراتها على مواقع مليشيا الحوثي في صعدة..



10:18 AM - 21 Oct 2019

1 Retweet



دلائل  
@dala2el

ضربات جوية دقيقة تستهدف مجموعة من ارهابيي "أنصار الشريعة" في #اليمن في شبوة وأبين و جبال نوفان بمحافظة البيضاء \_

9:42 AM · Mar 6, 2017 · Twitter Web Client



7. CENTCOM then shifted strategies & deleted disclosures of ties to the Twitter accounts. The bios of the accounts changed to seemingly organic profiles. One bio read: "Euphrates pulse." Another used an apparent deep fake profile pic & claimed to be a source of Iraqi opinion.



مرسال الثغور

@althughur

الحساب تابع للقيادة المركزية الأمريكية لتغطية الحرب على الإرهاب ومكافحة الفكر المتطرف

📍 Florida, USA

📅 Joined April 2015



نبض الفرات

@althughur

📅 Joined April 2015

8. One Twitter official who spoke to me said he feels deceived by the covert shift. Still, many emails from throughout 2020 show that high-level Twitter executives were well aware of DoD's vast network of fake accounts & covert propaganda and did not suspend the accounts.

9. For example, Twitter lawyer Jim Baker mused in a July 2020 email, about an upcoming DoD meeting, that the Pentagon used "poor tradecraft" in setting up its network, and were seeking strategies for not exposing the accounts that are "linked to each other or to DoD or the USG."

10. Stacia Cardille, another Twitter attorney, replied that the Pentagon wanted a SCIF & may want to retroactively classify its social media activities "to obfuscate their activity in this space, and that this may represent an overclassification to avoid embarrassment."



**Stacia Cardille**

Re: PRIVILEGED & CONFIDENTIAL - DOD next steps

To: Angela Sherrer, Jim Baker

July 8, 2020 at 11:30 AM

---

Jim, Angela and I discussed attendance at this classified briefing. I heard from Facebook that they are securing SCIFs in DC and San Francisco for a meeting, possibly on Friday.

I have some significant concerns that the motivations for classifications are slightly different than the ones you outlined in the email below. I think it is possible DOD is using retroactive classification to obfuscate their activity in this space, and that this may represent an overclassification to avoid embarrassment.

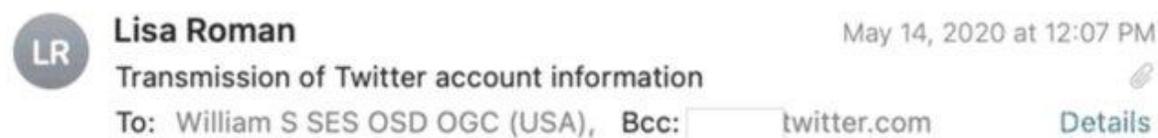
Angela and I think you would be more effective in this meeting than me, as the officials will view you more seriously.

Thoughts on this?

(Separate and apart from the merits, I have some concerns with attending due to Covid exposure and my two immune-compromised family members.)

11. In several other 2020 emails, high-level Twitter executives/lawyers discussed the covert network and even recirculated the 2017 list from CENTCOM and shared another list of 157 undisclosed Pentagon accounts, again mostly focused on Middle East military issues.

12. In a May 2020 email, Twitter's Lisa Roman emailed the DoD w/two lists. One list was accounts "previously provided to us" & another list Twitter detected. The accounts tweeted in Russian & Arabic on US military issues in Syria/ISIS & many also did not disclose Pentagon ties.



Bill,

Thank you again for your time yesterday. As discussed, attached is a spreadsheet with the accounts we described on our call. The first tab lists those accounts previously provided to us and the second, associated accounts that Twitter has discovered. Please note that the second tab is not intended to be an exhaustive list and if DOD is aware of additional associated accounts which may violate our Rules, those should be included in the scope of our request.

I would be grateful if you would confirm receipt and that you are able to access this spreadsheet without issue. Please let me know if you have any questions regarding this information.

Best,  
Lisa



Twitter  
Accou...20.xlsx

13. Many of these secretive U.S. military propaganda accounts, despite detection by Twitter as late as 2020 (but potentially earlier) continued tweeting through this year, some not suspended until May 2022 or later, according to records I reviewed.

14. In August 2022, a Stanford Internet Observatory report exposed a U.S. military covert propaganda network on Facebook, Telegram, Twitter & other apps using fake news portals and deep fake images and memes against U.S. foreign adversaries.

[https://public-assets.graphika.com/reports/graphika\\_stanford\\_internet\\_observatory\\_report\\_unheard\\_voice.pdf](https://public-assets.graphika.com/reports/graphika_stanford_internet_observatory_report_unheard_voice.pdf)

15. The U.S. propaganda network relentlessly pushed narratives against Russia, China, and other foreign countries. They accused Iran of "threatening Iraq's water security and flooding the country with crystal meth," and of harvesting the organs of Afghan refugees.

16. The Stanford report did not identify all of the accounts in the network but one they did name was the exact same Twitter account CENTCOM asked for whitelist privileges in its 2017 email. I verified via Twitter's internal tools. The account used an AI-created deep fake image.



Figure 46: The profile picture used by the Facebook page Discoverer and two other assets in the Middle East group. Issues with the left ear and the central alignment of the eyes suggest it was generated using artificial intelligence techniques.



Figure 47: Left: Archived version of the Discoverer Twitter account with an Arabic-language bio claiming an affiliation with CENTCOM. Right: The same account shortly before it was suspended by Twitter.

17. In subsequent reporting, Twitter was cast as an unbiased hero for removing “a network of fake user accounts promoting pro-Western policy positions.” Media covering the story described Twitter as evenly applying its policies & proactive in suspending the DoD network.

18. The reality is much more murky. Twitter actively assisted CENTCOM’s network going back to 2017 and as late as 2020 knew these accounts were covert/created to deceive to manipulate the discourse, a violation of Twitter’s policies & promises. They waited years to suspend.

19. Twitter’s comms team was closely in touch with reporters, working to minimize Twitter’s role. When the WashPost reported on the scandal, Twitter officials congratulated each other because the story didn’t mention any Twitter employees & focused largely on the Pentagon.

On Fri, Sep 16, 2022 at 5:22 PM Lauren Culbertson <[redacted]@twitter.com> wrote:  
Thank you for the flag, Katie

On Fri, Sep 16, 2022 at 5:15 PM Jim Baker <[redacted]@twitter.com> wrote:  
Got it. Thanks

On Fri, Sep 16, 2022 at 4:52 PM Rebecca Hahn <[redacted]@twitter.com> wrote:  
ack  
ty

On Fri, Sep 16, 2022 at 1:23 PM Katie Rosborough <[redacted]@twitter.com> wrote:  
*Privileged and confidential*

Hi there,

I hope you’re well. We wanted to give you a heads up that The Washington Post will be publishing a piece (most likely this weekend) that sheds more light on the U.S. government aspects of the recent [Graphika/Stanford report](#) about tech companies removing U.S.-based influence campaigns.

It’s a story that’s mostly focused on DoD and Facebook; however, there will be a couple lines that reference us alongside Facebook in that we reached out to them for a meeting. We don’t think they’ll tie it to anything Mudge-related or name any Twitter employees. We declined to comment.

I suspect this piece will get more attention in Washington with the DoD angle — we’ll keep you posted.

Thanks,  
Katie

**From:** Rebecca Hahn [redacted] twitter.com  
**Subject:** Re: privileged and confidential [inform] Follow-up on Graphika/Stanford report  
**Date:** September 19, 2022 at 8:03 PM  
**To:** Katie Rosborough [redacted] @twitter.com  
**Cc:** Lauren Culbertson [redacted] twitter.com, Jim Baker [redacted] @twitter.com, [redacted] twitter.com, [redacted] twitter.com, John Hughes [redacted] twitter.com, [redacted] twitter.com, [redacted] twitter.com, [redacted] twitter.com, Yoel Roth [redacted] twitter.com



thanks for doing all that you could to manage this one.  
it didn't seem to get too much traction beyond verge, cnn and wapo editors promoting.

On Mon, Sep 19, 2022 at 6:29 AM Katie Rosborough <[redacted]@twitter.com> wrote:  
Hi folks — Here's the piece, which I think turned out as expected. Formatted in a doc [here](#). Thanks.

[The Washington Post: Pentagon opens sweeping review of clandestine psychological operations](#)  
*Complaints about the U.S. military's influence operations using Facebook and Twitter have raised concern in the White House and federal agencies.*  
By [Ellen Nakashima](#)  
September 19, 2022 at 5:00 a.m. EDT

20. The conduct with the U.S. military's covert network stands in stark contrast with how Twitter has boasted about rapidly identifying and taking down covert accounts tied to state-backed influence operations, including Thailand, Russia, Venezuela, and others since 2016.

21. Here is my reported piece w/more detail. I was given access to Twitter for a few days. I signed/agreed to nothing, Twitter had no input into anything I did or wrote. The searches were carried out by a Twitter attorney, so what I saw could be limited.

<https://theintercept.com/2022/12/20/twitter-dod-us-military-accounts/>

If you want details about how I go about my reporting, a little more about myself, and further documentation & discussion, I just started a Substack. Sign up here:

<https://leefang.substack.com/p/creating-a-substack>

## Pinned Tweet



**Matt Taibbi**

@mtaibbi

# 1.THREAD: The Twitter Files TWITTER AND "OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES"

After weeks of "Twitter Files" reports detailing close coordination between the FBI and Twitter in moderating social media content, the Bureau issued a statement Wednesday.

[2.](#) It didn't refute allegations. Instead, it decried "conspiracy theorists" publishing "misinformation," whose "sole aim" is to "discredit the agency."

The men and women of the FBI work every day to protect the American public... It is unfortunate that **conspiracy theorists** and others are feeding the American public **misinformation** with the sole purpose of attempting to discredit the agency.

3.They must think us unambitious, if our "sole aim" is to discredit the FBI. After all, a whole range of government agencies discredit themselves in the [#TwitterFiles](#). Why stop with one?

4.The files show the FBI acting as doorman to a vast program of social media surveillance and censorship, encompassing agencies across the federal government – from the State Department to the Pentagon to the CIA.

5.The operation is far bigger than the reported 80 members of the Foreign Influence Task Force (FITF), which also facilitates requests from a wide array of smaller actors - from local cops to media to state governments.

6. Twitter had so much contact with so many agencies that executives lost track. Is today the DOD, and tomorrow the FBI? Is it the weekly call, or the monthly meeting? It was dizzying.

For DOD? No, that's a different group. Will reply to that in a second.

On Mon, May 11, 2020 at 2:12 PM [redacted] > wrote:

Yoel, should the prep call be you + [redacted] and I

Thanks!

Hope you're doing well!

Would it be possible for you to add [redacted] and [redacted] to the invite for the monthly USG/industry call?

Thanks!

Yoel

7. A chief end result was that thousands of official "reports" flowed to Twitter from all over, through the FITF and the FBI's San Francisco field office.

8. On June 29th, 2020, San Francisco FBI agent Elvis Chan wrote to pair of Twitter execs asking if he could invite an "OGA" to an upcoming conference:

On Mon, Jun 29, 2020 at 11:24 AM Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI)

[redacted] fbi.gov > wrote:

Stacia/[redacted] – I wanted to follow up to see if I could forward this invitation to an OGA? Specifically the people from [redacted]'s former employer were inquiring. Hope all is well. Thanks!

Regards,  
Elvis

Elvis M. Chan  
Supervisory Special Agent

9. OGA, or "Other Government Organization," can be a euphemism for CIA, according to multiple former intelligence officials and contractors. Chuckles one: "They think it's mysterious, but it's just conspicuous."

10. "Other Government Agency (the place where I worked for 27 years)," says retired CIA officer Ray McGovern.

11. It was an open secret at Twitter that one of its executives was ex-CIA, which is why Chan referred to that executive's "former employer."

12. The first Twitter executive abandoned any pretense to stealth and emailed that the employee "used to work for the CIA, so that is Elvis's question."

On Mon, Jun 29, 2020 at 2:29 PM [REDACTED]@twitter.com>  
wrote:

Stacia, I have no involvement here - I leave this to you to respond.

[REDACTED] used to work for the CIA, so that is Elvis' question.

13. Senior legal executive Stacia Cardille, whose alertness stood out among Twitter leaders, replied, "I know" and "I thought my silence was understood."

On Mon, Jun 29, 2020 at 2:45 PM Stacia Cardille [REDACTED]@twitter.com>  
wrote:

I know. Let me see if it is publicly announced and I will tell him that. (I thought my silence was understood.)

14. Cardille then passes on conference details to recently-hired ex-FBI lawyer Jim Baker.



**Stacia Cardille**

July 8, 2020 at 9:22 AM

Fwd: [inform] Info Ops Conference with Carnegie

To: Jim Baker

Sunlight conference tomorrow. No need for you to attend. Carnegie is doing the heavy lift. I offered to assist Nick and Yoel, but there are no academic papers to review or anything. I was involved in the early scoping of the joint project as well.

I invited the FBI, and I believe that the CIA will virtually attend too.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

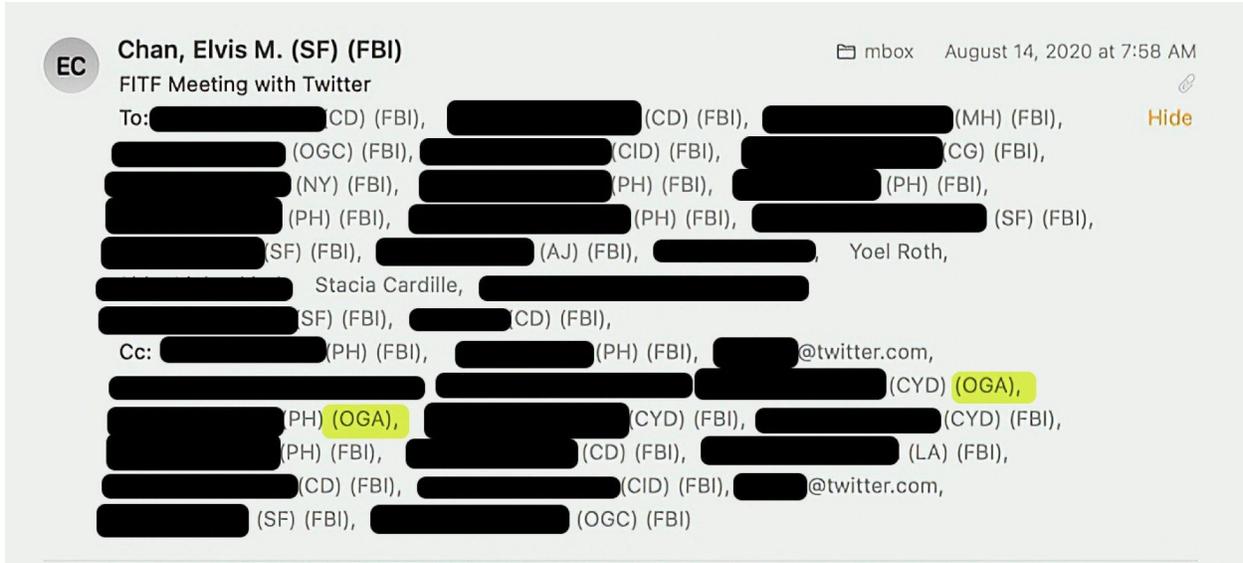
Thanks,  
Stacia

15. "I invited the FBI and the CIA virtually will attend too," Cardille says to Baker, adding pointedly: "No need for you to attend."

16. The government was in constant contact not just with Twitter but with virtually every major tech firm.

17. These included Facebook, Microsoft, Verizon, Reddit, even Pinterest, and many others. Industry players also held regular meetings without government.

[18.One](#) of the most common forums was a regular meeting of the multi-agency Foreign Influence Task Force (FITF), attended by spates of executives, FBI personnel, and – nearly always – one or two attendees marked “OGA.”



19. The FITF meeting agendas virtually always included, at or near the beginning, an “OGA briefing,” usually about foreign matters (hold that thought).



**Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI)**

FITF Meeting with Twitter

To: & 20 more

7/30/20



[Details](#)

---

All - please forward to whomever you deem appropriate.

Agenda:

#### Russia Status

- IRA Update
- OGA Briefing
- APT28 Update

#### China Status

- PRC Update
- APT31 Briefing

#### Global Status

- Iran Update
- Venezuela Briefing
- North Korea Briefing

#### Planning for the Elections

- FBI Posture
- Your Posture
- Information Sharing Channels and Methods

EC

**Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI)**

FITF Meeting with Twitter

August 14, 2020 at 7:58 AM



[REDACTED] (CD) (FBI) & 39 more

[Details](#)

All - please forward to whomever you deem appropriate.

Agenda:

Russia Status

- \* IRA Update
- \* OGA Briefing
- \* APT28 Update

China Status

- \* PRC Update
- \* APT31 Briefing

Global Status

- \* Iran Update
- \* Venezuela Briefing
- \* North Korea Briefing

Planning for the Elections

- \* FBI Posture
- \* Your Posture

EC

Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI)

July 16, 2020 at 5:09 PM

Next FITF Meetings

To: Stacia Cardille, Cc: [REDACTED] Yoel Roth & 1 more

[Details](#)

Hi Stacia,

I know it's bananas right now over there, but I'm wondering if we can get something on the calendar for the next round of FITF meetings. Here are the open dates/times which are left:

Tuesday, August 11, 10:30 am to 12 pm PDT

Wednesday, August 12, 10:30 am to 12 pm PDT

Thursday, August 13, 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm PDT

Friday, August 14, 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm PDT

The tentative agenda is as follows:

#### Russia Status

- IRA Update
- OGA briefing (Software & influence campaign against Ukraine)

#### China Status

- General PRC Update
- APT31 briefing

#### Global Status

- Iran Update
- Venezuela briefing
- North Korea briefing

#### Planning for U.S. Elections

- FBI Posture
- Your Posture
- Information sharing channels and methods

Regards,  
Elvis

Elvis M. Chan  
Supervisory Special Agent

20. Despite its official remit being "Foreign Influence," the FITF and the SF FBI office became conduit for mountains of domestic moderation requests, from state governments, even local police:

**EC** **Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI)** November 5, 2020 at 11:32 AM  
Introduction to MPD [Details](#)  
To: Stacia Cardille, Cc: [REDACTED] & 1 more

Hi Stacia,

FBI Minneapolis requested that I put you in touch with Lt. Hoff about some recent activities, which I've provided below. I'll let the two of you take it from here. Thanks.

<https://twitter.com/TCparkresponder/status/1324418480460820480> ✓

<https://twitter.com/TCparkresponder/status/1324402105063370753>

**Lieutenant Jon Hoff**  
**Strategic Information Center**  
**Minneapolis Police Department**  
**25 37<sup>th</sup> Ave NE.**  
**Minneapolis, MN 55421**

[REDACTED]

Regards,  
Elvis

21. Many requests arrived via Teleporter, a one-way platform in which many communications were timed to vanish:

TELEPORTER DOWNLOAD ACCESS

You have been granted download access to Teleporter.  
The link(s) will be valid until **Thu, Nov 05, 2020 04:18AM UTC**

FBI San Francisco Election EOC threat intel

[Download](#)

22. Especially as the election approached in 2020, the FITF/FBI overwhelmed Twitter with requests, sending lists of hundreds of problem accounts:

**EC** **Chan, Elvis M. (SF) (FBI)** July 20, 2020 at 11:44 AM  
Re: The article and names associated with NYO Twitter request [Details](#)  
To: [REDACTED] Stacia Cardille Cc: & 4 more

---

Twitter folks,

Could you see below from our FITF-Global Unit and let us know what you think? Thanks!

Regards,  
Elvis

1	URLs
2	<a href="https://twitter.com/Ricchi">https://twitter.com/Ricchi</a>
3	<a href="https://twitter.com/jeanie">https://twitter.com/jeanie</a>
4	<a href="https://twitter.com/Speak">https://twitter.com/Speak</a>
5	<a href="https://twitter.com/Evrop">https://twitter.com/Evrop</a>
6	<a href="https://twitter.com/studb">https://twitter.com/studb</a>
7	<a href="https://twitter.com/brend">https://twitter.com/brend</a>
8	<a href="https://twitter.com/lilaarc">https://twitter.com/lilaarc</a>
9	<a href="https://twitter.com/voraci">https://twitter.com/voraci</a>
10	<a href="https://twitter.com/idOfD">https://twitter.com/idOfD</a>
11	<a href="https://twitter.com/Cordiz">https://twitter.com/Cordiz</a>
12	<a href="https://twitter.com/ni4ph">https://twitter.com/ni4ph</a>
13	<a href="https://twitter.com/C_som">https://twitter.com/C_som</a>
14	<a href="https://twitter.com/vicker">https://twitter.com/vicker</a>
15	<a href="https://twitter.com/Natio">https://twitter.com/Natio</a>
16	<a href="https://twitter.com/GoodV">https://twitter.com/GoodV</a>
17	<a href="https://twitter.com/meou">https://twitter.com/meou</a>
18	<a href="https://twitter.com/reptar">https://twitter.com/reptar</a>
19	<a href="https://twitter.com/laval_">https://twitter.com/laval_</a>
20	<a href="https://twitter.com/gabby">https://twitter.com/gabby</a>
21	<a href="https://twitter.com/lfound">https://twitter.com/lfound</a>
22	<a href="https://twitter.com/Caroli">https://twitter.com/Caroli</a>
23	<a href="https://twitter.com/coopr">https://twitter.com/coopr</a>
24	<a href="https://twitter.com/Edwar">https://twitter.com/Edwar</a>
25	<a href="https://twitter.com/Edwar">https://twitter.com/Edwar</a>
26	<a href="https://twitter.com/Edwar">https://twitter.com/Edwar</a>

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Stacia Cardille [REDACTED]@twitter.com>  
**Subject:** FBI Report on Possible Violative Content  
**Date:** November 3, 2020 at 5:24:37 PM PST  
**To:** [REDACTED]@twitter.com>  
**Cc:** US Elections Escalations [REDACTED]@twitter.com>

The FBI San Francisco Emergency Operations Center sent us the attached report of 207 Tweets they believe may be in violation of our policies.

Spreadsheet attached.

Thank you,  
Stacia

23. Email after email came from the San Francisco office heading into the election, often adorned with an Excel attachment:

Hi Stacia,

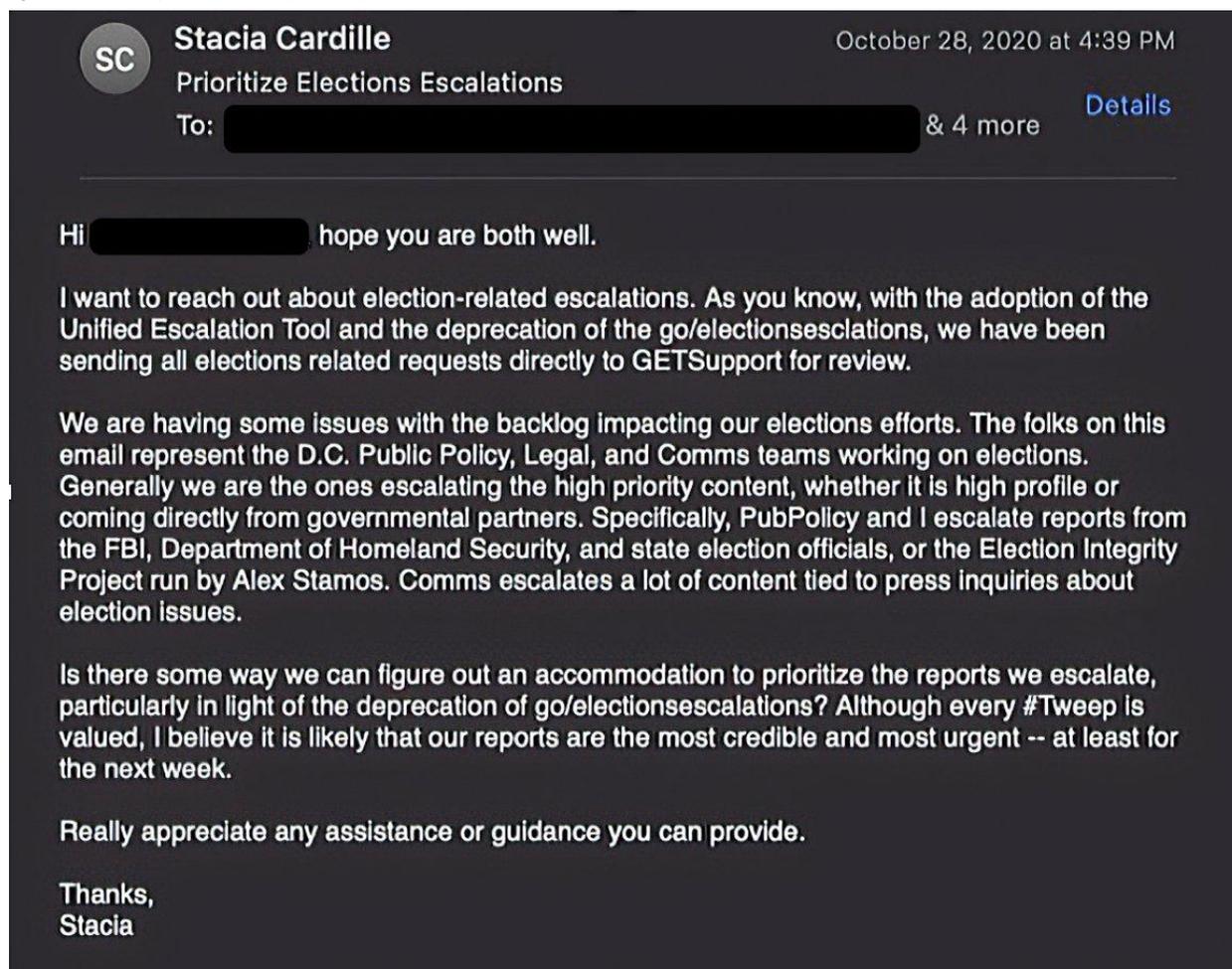
Our FBI Baltimore identified these Twitter handles and tweets which appear to provide misleading information on time, place, or manner of voting in the upcoming elections. We believe these may violate your terms of service and wanted to bring them to your attention. We would appreciate any feedback you have regarding this matter. Thanks!

Regards,  
Elvis

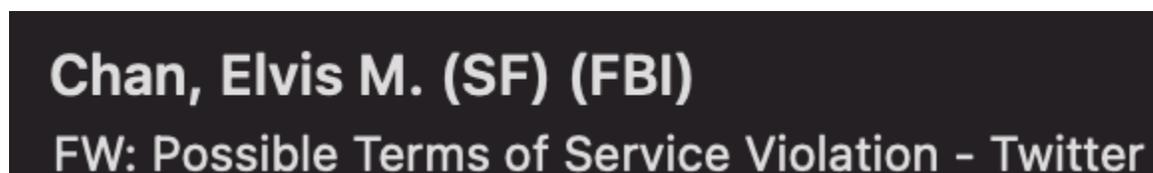


Tweets  
09-24-...20.xlsx

24. There were so many government requests, Twitter employees had to improvise a system for prioritizing/triaging them:



25. The FBI was clearly tailoring searches to Twitter's policies. FBI complaints were almost always depicted somewhere as a "possible terms of service violation," even in the subject line:



26. Twitter executives noticed the FBI appeared to be assigning personnel to look for Twitter violations.

27. "They have some folks in the Baltimore field office and at HQ that are just doing keyword searches for violations. This is probably the 10th request I have dealt with in the last 5 days," remarked Cardille.

SC

**Stacia Cardille**

November 3, 2020 at 5:45 PM

Re: FBI Report on Possible Violative Content

To: Jim Baker

---

They have some folks in the Baltimore field office and at HQ that are just doing keyword searches for violations. This is probably the 10th request I have dealt with in the last 5 days, but I never typically include a huge distribution on it because there wasn't really a need for this kind of visibility. Let me know if you have any other questions.

Thanks,  
Stacia

28. Even ex-FBI lawyer Jim Baker agreed: "Odd that they are searching for violations of our policies."

JB

**Jim Baker**

November 3, 2020 at 6:34 PM

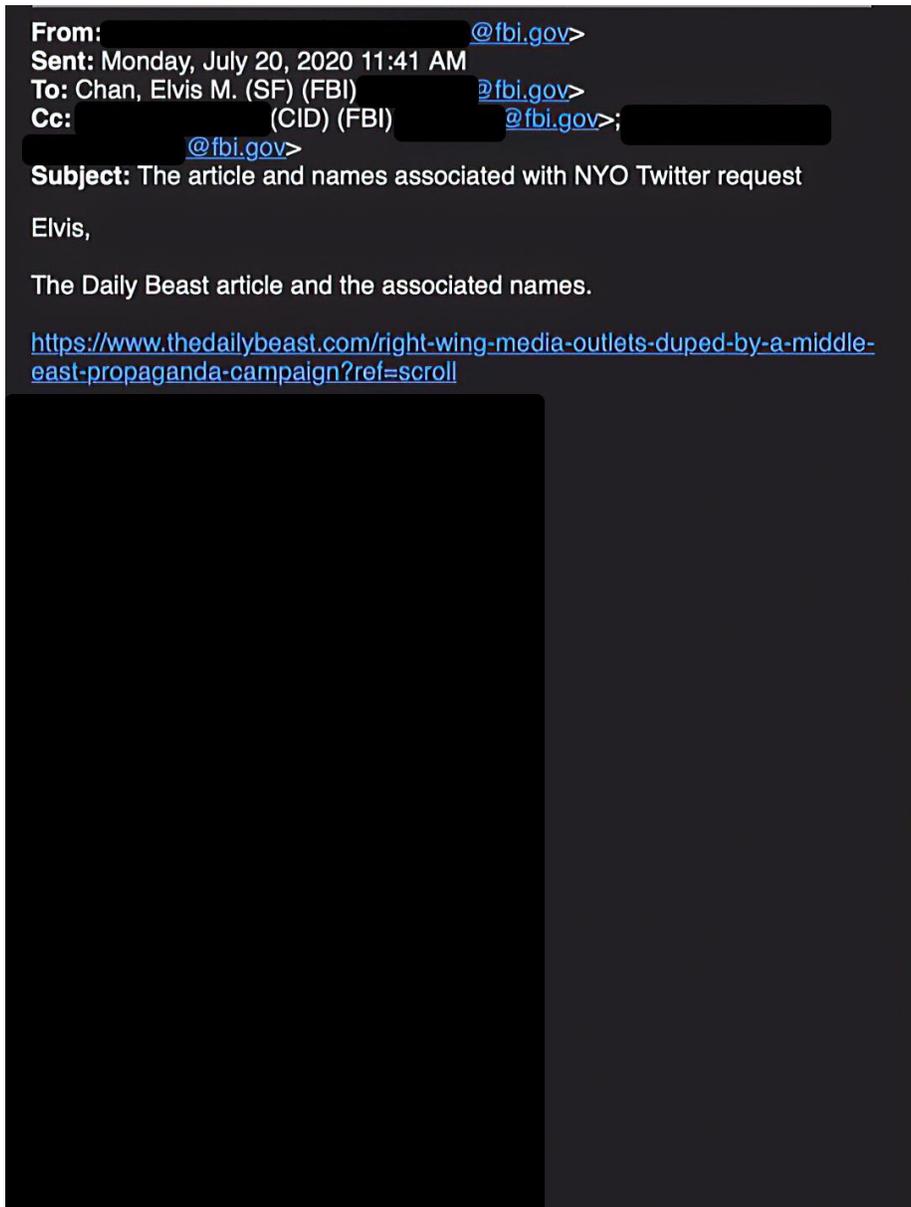
Re: FBI Report on Possible Violative Content

To: Stacia Cardille

---

But also odd that they are searching for violations of our policies.

29. The New York FBI office even sent requests for the “user IDs and handles” of a long list of accounts named in a Daily Beast article. Senior executives say they are “supportive” and “completely comfortable” doing so.



**YR** Yoel Roth August 19, 2020 at 10:04 AM  
Re: The article and names associated with NYO Twitter request [Details](#)  
To: Yoel Roth, Cc: [redacted], [redacted] & 1 more

---

Reupping our internal discussion: Any objections to sending the list of user IDs and handles? I'm comfortable doing so.

30. It seemed to strike no one as strange that a "Foreign Influence" task force was forwarding thousands of mostly domestic reports, along with the DHS, about the fringiest material:



## **Biden Using SCORECARD and THE HAMMER To Steal Another U.S. Presidential Election -- Just Like Obama And Biden Did In 2012 - The American Report**

By Mary Fanning and Alan Jones | October 31,

2020 In February 2009, the Obama administration commandeered a powerful supercomputer system known as THE HAMMER. THE HAMMER includes an exploit application known as SCORECARD that is capable of hacking into elections and stealing the vote, according to CIA contractor-turned-whistleblower Dennis Montgomery, who designed and built [...]

31. “Foreign meddling” had been the ostensible justification for expanded moderation since platforms like Twitter were dragged to the Hill by the Senate in 2017:

*The New York Times*

# *Tech Executives Are Contrite About Election Meddling, but Make Few Promises on Capitol Hill*

32. Yet behind the scenes, Twitter executives struggled against government claims of foreign interference supposedly occurring on their platform and others:

[UE-193128] <a href="#">FITF Referral: IRA account on Reddit</a> Created: 2022-08-09 Updated: 2022-08-15 Resolved: 2022-08-15	
<b>Status:</b>	Closed
<b>Project:</b>	<a href="#">Unified Escalations</a>
<b>Affects Version/s:</b>	None
<b>Fix Version/s:</b>	None
<b>Security Level:</b>	SI RESTRICTED

33. The [#TwitterFiles](#) show execs under constant pressure to validate theories of foreign influence – and unable to find evidence for key assertions.

34. "Found no links to Russia," says one analyst, but suggests he could "brainstorm" to "find a stronger connection."

Comment by [REDACTED] [ 2022-03-08 ]

Hi [REDACTED]

After I reviewed the accounts, and found no links to Russia, I asked [REDACTED] on this ticket [REDACTED] and this was his answer:

"Thanks for tagging in the workflow. From my checks, I could not find any indicators to suggest that the account [REDACTED] is Russian. Even the other phone linked accounts ([REDACTED]) does not have indicators to suggest it is Russian proxy. Did checks via DomainTools for IP resolves, and email checks for OSINT. However, going by the content and narrative coming out from the account is definitely pro-Russian, and/or could be a Russian proxy."

I can brainstorm with [REDACTED] and see if we can dig even deeper and try to find a stronger connection.

35. "Extremely tenuous circumstantial chance of being related," says another.

Hey [REDACTED]

Looked into this here. Didn't find any exact naming matches and really any information to link the reddit account(s) to any on-platform presence at Twitter. There was one account that has an *incredibly tenuous circumstantial chance* of being related so documenting the account here just in case we ever need to come back to it (created in a *similar* timeframe, RU login, sus english name): [REDACTED]

36. "No real matches using the info," says former Trust and Safety chief Yoel Roth in another case, noting some links were "clearly Russian," but another was a "house rental in South Carolina?"

No real matches using most of the info. The only thing that did turn up something was the IP addresses and accounts using multiple from the provided.

Even then, nothing looked particularly violative, some clearly Russian though, but also included an account for a house rental in South Carolina?

[REDACTED]

[Yoel Roth](#) not really anything worth taking out. But there are 2 personas linked to 2 clusters they might be interested in. Both appear to be Russian-like names. However, I wouldn't even call that a slam dunk since it was based on IP data and I think at least 1 of the returned accounts from the IP data doesn't at all look related.

37. In another case, Roth concludes a series of Venezuelan pro-Maduro accounts are unrelated to Russia's Internet Research Agency, because they're too high-volume:

Hey [REDACTED]

Thanks for reaching out. A couple of things from a quick review of this data:

A few of the accounts whose tweets appear in your list are not IRA/Russia-linked. In Feb 2019, we [re-released](#) our IRA-linked datasets, excluding a number of accounts that were operated out of Venezuela. Those accounts were **extremely high volume tweeters**, generally using automation (in a way that was pretty **uncharacteristic of a lot of the other IRA activity**). We have very high confidence that they are not linked to the IRA, or to Russian activity in any form. The current official datasets you can download from us do not include these accounts in the RU archive, and instead include them in a Jan 2019 release of Venezuelan activity (titled "Venezuela (January 2019, set 2) - 764 accounts"). If you download the unhashed Venezuela release, you should be able to cross-reference and exclude.

Also, at least a couple of the tweets I spot-checked were deleted by the users themselves. When we first published our archives of Russian activity, we indicated that we excluded tweets deleted prior to the suspension of the account, amounting to a less than 1% decrease in the volume of tweets (as

---

best we were able to tell). We had to exclude them due to legal constraints. But, again, the volume there should be a very small part of the overall RU activity - if you see something different after excluding the Venezuelan accounts, let me know and I can dig back in.

Thanks,

Yoel

38. The Venezuelans "were extremely high-volume tweeters... pretty uncharacteristic of a lot of the other IRA activity," Roth says.

39. In a key email, news that the State Department was making a wobbly public assertion of Russian influence led an exec – the same one with the “OGA” past - to make a damning admission:

40. “Due to a lack of technical evidence on our end, I've generally left it be, waiting for more evidence,” he says. “Our window on that is closing, given that government partners are becoming more aggressive on attribution.”

[REDACTED] October 1, 2020 at 5:19 PM  
Re: Flag from the GEC [Details](#)  
To: [REDACTED] Cc: Yoel Roth, integrity-io

Yep. InfoBRICS is an entity that we've received previous notice on, though if recollection serves, government partners have never been so specific as to say that it was directly controlled by the GRU. BRICS is an inherently Russia-dominated economic organization, so it was always likely that a website and Twitter account designed to promote it would be directed by the Kremlin. Due to a lack of technical evidence on our end, I've generally left it be, waiting for more evidence. I think that our window on that is closing, given that government partners are becoming more aggressive on attribution and reporting on it. I'm going to go ahead with suspension and marking the domain as UNSAFE.

Rebel Inside was a new one for me too. Not even sure what the goal of the account could possibly be other than to highlight unrest in other areas of the world besides Russia. I've already suspended it and marked its domain as UNSAFE.

.....

41. Translation: “more aggressive” “government partners” had closed Twitter’s “window” of independence.

42. "Other Government Agencies" ended up sharing intelligence through the FBI and FITF not just with Twitter, but with Yahoo!, Twitch, Cloudflare, LinkedIn, even Wikimedia:

21 April 2022

2022-29989

USA/Other:Other/Apple; USA/Other:Other/Google/Youtube;  
USA/Other:Other/Facebook/Meta; USA/Other:Other/Twitter;  
USA/Other:Other/Reddit; USA/Other:Other/Verizon Media/Yahoo;  
USA/Other:Other/LinkedIn; USA/Other:Other/Wikimedia

**(U) Tearline:**

(U) The tearline must be used as-is; no changes to the text/language are permitted.

-----  
START OF TEXT

UNCLASSIFIED

(U) THIS INFORMATION IS PROVIDED ONLY FOR INTELLIGENCE PURPOSES IN AN EFFORT TO DEVELOP POTENTIAL INVESTIGATIVE LEADS. IT CANNOT BE USED IN CONNECTION WITH ANY FOREIGN OR DOMESTIC COURT PROCEEDINGS OR FOR ANY OTHER LEGAL, JUDICIAL, OR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES.

(U) We previously passed you information that highlighted, as part of Russian mogul Yevgeniy Prigozhin's Internet Research Agency's (IRA) attempt to denigrate French President Emmanuel Macron's campaign ahead of the late April 2022 presidential run-off election, IRA plans to expose its own troll farms in Benin, Mali, and Senegal while alleging that Macron's campaign was the entity responsible for their use and creation.

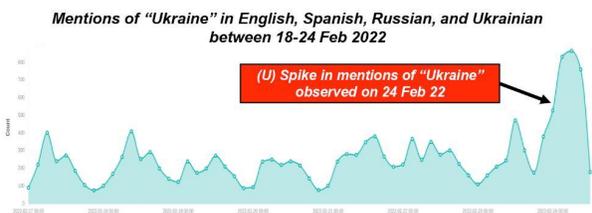
(U) We assess that the following links are also part of the IRA's effort to amplify the same narratives:

- <https://netafrique.net/fievre-electorale-en-france-reseau-africain-de-la-propagande/>
- <https://theworldnews.net/ml-news/les-habitants-du-senegal-et-du-mali-elisent-le-president-de-la-france-2022-par-hassana-diallo>
- <https://bamada.net/les-habitants-du-senegal-et-du-mali-elisent-le-president-de-la-france-2022-par-hassana-diallo>
- [https://senego.com/les-habitants-du-senegal-et-du-mali-elisent-le-president-de-la-france-2022-par-hassana-diallo\\_1411114.html](https://senego.com/les-habitants-du-senegal-et-du-mali-elisent-le-president-de-la-france-2022-par-hassana-diallo_1411114.html)
- <https://news.piaafrica.com/senego-politique/les-habitants-du-senegal-et-du-mali-elisent-le-president-de-la-france-2022-par-hassana-diallo/54fe9e8d69>
- <http://mali.niooz.fr/les-habitants-du-senegal-et-du-mali-elisent-le-president-de-la-france-2022-par-hassana-diallo-43320573.shtml>

43. Former CIA agent and whistleblower John Kiriakou believes he recognizes the formatting of these reports.
44. "Looks right on to me," Kiriakou says, noting that "what was cut off above [the "tearline"] was the originating CIA office and all the copied offices."
45. Many people wonder if Internet platforms receive direction from intelligence agencies about moderation of foreign policy news stories. It appears Twitter did, in some cases by way of the FITF/FBI.
46. These reports are far more factually controversial than domestic counterparts.
47. One intel report lists accounts tied to "Ukraine 'neo-Nazi' Propaganda." This includes assertions that Joe Biden helped orchestrate a coup in 2014 and "put his son on the board of Burisma."

## Suspected Russian Troll Farm: Ukraine Propaganda

**Monitoring indicates that a suspected Russian troll farm is propagating disinformation on Twitter about the U.S. and Ukrainian governments to support Russian actions in Ukraine.**



### (U) Key Findings

- (U) 999 Twitter profiles linked to suspected Russian troll farm; over 16K Tweets mentioning "Ukraine" in last 7 days
- (U) Top Influencer, ██████████ has been mentioned in 3.9K Tweets (roughly 24% of all Tweets mentioning "Ukraine"):
  - (U) Profile created on 28 Nov 2011 (over 11 years old)
  - (U) Profile location is listed as "#Belarus"
  - (CUI) Backup profile (██████████) was created on 23 Feb 22 and is listed in ██████████ bio; likely a preparation for suspension / deactivation of the primary profile
- (U) Prevailing narrative emphasizes similarity between current Ukrainian government and Nazis during WWII; attributes "Nazification" to U.S. government (See sample of content)
- (U) Over 91% of all content gathered is English, which may indicate that western audiences are primary target audience
- (U) Spike in Twitter activity on 24 Feb 22 likely synchronized with Russian military advancement in Ukraine

(U) Sample of Content & Images Being Propagated

(U) "THE DE-NAZIFICATION OF THE DONBASS AND ALL UKRAINE IS UNDERWAY..."

(U) "Ukraine is a festering sore crawling with ultra-violent, neo-Nazis, a brutally low-brow political class & infested with utterly corrupt oligarchs."

(U) "Both #Washington & #Kiev are reversing everything happening in the #Donbass. They are blatantly lying."

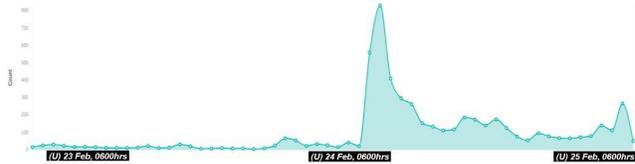
(U) It's #Kyiv that's provoking #Russia by attacking the people of #Donetsk & #Lugansk. Russia is doing no such thing. #Biden backs up #Zelensky's lies constantly."

(U) "since 1953 the CIA operated two major programs intent on not only destabilizing Ukraine but Nazifying it with followers of the World War II Ukrainian Nazi leader Stepan Bandera."

## Ukraine “neo-Nazi” Propaganda Overview

The below is a combination of Boolean search filters in English, Spanish, Russian, and Ukrainian to map the network of Twitter profiles linked to Ukraine “neo-Nazi” propaganda over the last 48hrs.

Ukraine “neo-Nazi” Propaganda Timeline: 23-25 Feb 2022



### (U) Key Findings

- (U) 5.4K Tweets gathered and 4.7K Twitter profiles identified between 23 Feb – 25 Feb 2022
- (U) Propaganda being amplified by 185 known or suspected Twitter bots linked to Venezuela & Cuba:
  - (U) Top Influencers: @ [redacted] @ [redacted] @ [redacted] @ [redacted], and @ [redacted]
- (U) Prevailing narratives blame U.S. for “Nazification” of the Ukraine:
  - (U) “Biden is the architect of the 2014 ousting of a leader w 90% support using U.S backed Neo Nazis & then put his son on the board of Burisma.”
  - (U) “A CIA coup in Ukraine happened which led to a fascist neo-nazi regime being installed. This led to NATO troops with the potential of nuclear weapons being at the doorstep of Russia.”
- (U) Top Languages are English (78%) and Spanish (19%):
  - (CUI) Western audiences may be primary target of propaganda; English is also most used language on Twitter (i.e., increased reach)
  - (CUI) Significant amount of Spanish content corroborates findings on Venezuela / Cuba amplification

### (U) Boolean String Used for Search

“(Ukraine OR Ucraina OR Україна OR Україна) AND (Nazi OR NeoNazi OR NEONAZI OR “Neo Nazi” OR neo-Nazi OR нацистский OR нацистський OR неонацистський OR неонацистский) AND (U.S. OR “United States” OR “Estados Unidos” OR EEUU OR Biden OR Zelensky OR CIA OR “Правительство США” OR США OR “Уряд США” OR Байден OR ЦРУ)”

### (U) Most Mentioned Twitter Profiles



### (U) Most Mentioned Twitter Hashtags



48. Another report asserts a list of accounts accusing the “Biden administration” of “corruption” in vaccine distribution are part of a Russian influence campaign:

(U) We also assess with high confidence that the IRA was responsible in mid-February 2022 for producing and placing in media and social media information in multiple languages, to include French, English, and Spanish, on the following two narratives:

- That Western Europeans in Africa were not acting in the best interests of the African nations, and specifically were involved in intimidation, coercion, and blackmail in the Sahara-Sahel zone, and were not interested in helping to fight terrorism in the Sahel.
- The Biden Administration was selling better places in the COVID-19 vaccine queue to countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America and therefore, U.S. corruption was influencing the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines.



50. One report says a site “documenting purported rights abuses committed by Ukrainians” is directed by Russian agents:

**2022-21593**

USA/Other:Other/Apple; USA/Other:Other/Google/Youtube;  
USA/Other:Other/Facebook; USA/Other:Other/Twitter;  
USA/Other:Other/Reddit; USA/Other:Other/Verizon Media/Yahoo;  
USA/Other:Other/LinkedIn; USA/Other:Other/Wikimedia;  
USA/Other:Other/CloudFlare

**(U) Tearline:**

(U) The tearline must be used as-is; no changes to the text/language are permitted.

-----  
START OF TEXT

UNCLASSIFIED

(U) THIS INFORMATION IS PROVIDED ONLY FOR INTELLIGENCE PURPOSES IN AN EFFORT TO DEVELOP POTENTIAL INVESTIGATIVE LEADS. IT CANNOT BE USED IN CONNECTION WITH ANY FOREIGN OR DOMESTIC COURT PROCEEDINGS OR FOR ANY OTHER LEGAL, JUDICIAL, OR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES.

(U) We assess that The Tragedy of Donbas (donbasstragedy.info), a website documenting purported human rights abuses committed by Ukrainians since 2014, is directed by the Russian General Staff Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU).

UNCLASSIFIED

END OF TEXT

51. Intel about the shady origin of these accounts might be true. But so might at least some of the information in them – about neo-Nazis, rights abuses in Donbas, even about our own government. Should we block such material?

52. This is a difficult speech dilemma. Should the government be allowed to try to prevent Americans (and others) from seeing pro-Maduro or anti-Ukrainian accounts?

53. Often intel reports are just long lists of newspapers, tweets or YouTube videos guilty of “anti-Ukraine narratives”:

**2 August 2022**

**2022-51095**

USA/Other:Other/Apple; USA/Other:Other/Google/Youtube;  
USA/Other:Other/Meta; USA/Other:Other/Twitter;  
USA/Other:Other/Reddit; USA/Other:Other/Verizon Media/Yahoo;  
USA/Other:Other/LinkedIn; USA/Other:Other/Wikimedia

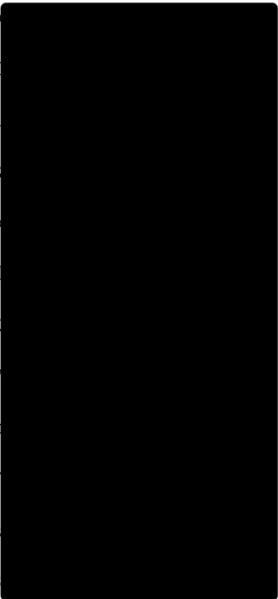
**(U) Tearline:**

(U) The tearline must be used as-is; no changes to the text/language are permitted.

-----  
(U) Russian mogul Yevgeniy Prigozhin's Internet Research Agency (IRA) was responsible for the following content, which highlighted predominantly anti-Ukraine narratives, between April and May 2022 at the following addresses on the specified platforms:

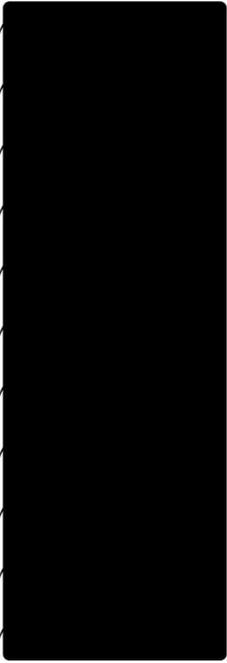
YouTube: (U)

https://youtube.com/shorts/  
https://youtube.com/shorts/





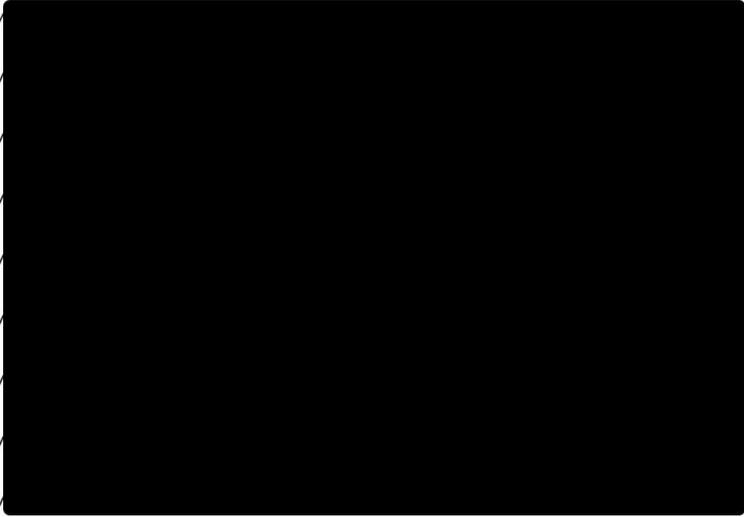
https://youtube.com/shorts/  
https://youtube.com/shorts/



Twitter: (U)

(U) The IRA was responsible for the following posts and likely controlled the underpinning account handles:

https://twitter.com/  
https://twitter.com/  
https://twitter.com/  
https://twitter.com/  
https://twitter.com/  
https://twitter.com/  
https://twitter.com/  
https://twitter.com/  
https://twitter.com/





54. Sometimes - not always - Twitter and YouTube blocked the accounts. But now we know for sure what Roth meant by “the Bureau (and by extension the IC).”

*Privileged and Confidential*

Hi team,

The questions we received are attached. I'm frankly perplexed by the requests here, which seem more like something we'd get from a congressional committee than the Bureau. There's a big discussion to be had about state-controlled media, which will be impacted by the label launch later this month — but I'm not particularly comfortable with the Bureau (and by extension the IC) demanding written answers here. What's your perspective on how best to navigate?

Thanks,

Yoel

55. The line between “misinformation” and “distorting propaganda” is thin. Are we comfortable with so many companies receiving so many reports from a “more aggressive” government?

56. The CIA has yet to comment on the nature of its relationship to tech companies like Twitter. Twitter had no input into anything I did or wrote. The searches were carried out by third parties, so what I saw could be limited.

Watch [@bariweiss](#), [@shellenbergerMD](#), [@lhfang](#), and this space for more, on issues ranging from Covid-19 to Twitter's relationship to congress, and more.