

# The War on Free Speech Continues

Government and social media move to block platforms for those promoting “misinformation”

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*The Biden Administration’s effort to withdraw nearly all US troops from Afghanistan and Iraq before the end of the year is commendable and it is hoped that a departure from Syria will follow soon thereafter, but one must nevertheless be concerned that the overseas moves are being made to concentrate government resources on the domestic war that has already begun. I am, of course, referring to the ongoing efforts being made to extirpate “extremists” among American citizens who have been further identified as largely consisting of “white supremacists.”*

As part of the new war, ideas or even demonstrable facts that are considered to be undesirable are being targeted by the government working together with internet resources, most particularly the social media, to attack critics. It is being argued that the alleged provision of “misinformation” is doing actual harm to the country and the American people. Recently, much of the focus has been on the COVID virus, in support of the government’s intention to have all Americans vaccinated and, increasingly, again compelled to be masked when inside buildings that are accessible to the public. These efforts are being supported by media including Facebook, which features pop-ups directing the reader to a “safe” site whenever a piece appears that challenges the government orthodoxy on the spread of the virus.

One might reasonably argue that there is a national public health crisis that is part of a global problem which requires coordinated government intervention, but the actual statistics that reveal the existing low levels of infection and death in most states would not support that contention. And one might also observe that the growing problem involving the regulation of speech and even ideas by government working in cooperation with large corporations is potentially more serious than COVID or any other virus.

If the United States government and its corporate partners were in an honest way trying to protect the American people one might at least be sympathetic regarding the efforts being made, but both government and businesses have proven to be serial liars and purveyors of egregious untruths to serve their own agendas. Recently, the White House spokesman Jen Psaki suggested that those spreading false information about COVID vaccinations might well

be banned from spreading such lies on social media. The implication was that the government could compile lists of such “extremists” and use its regulatory authority to compel companies on the internet to censor individuals and groups in compliance with orders coming from the White House. The justification would be that government in this case gets a pass on limiting free speech and association due to a national health crisis.

Psaki has undoubtedly discovered a certain benevolence in big government which few Americans have noted before. Foreigners, however, being on the receiving end of wars resulting from the stream of lies emanating from Washington might well have a different viewpoint. President Bill Clinton relied on a false narrative to go to war in the Balkans and then used unprovoked attacks on Sudan and Afghanistan to draw attention away from an affair he was having with an intern. George W. Bush and his pack of neocon scoundrels, most of whom are still holding prestigious positions, used what was known to be fake information to justify destroying Afghanistan and Iraq. Barack Obama lied to overthrow the governments in Libya and Ukraine while also attempting to do the same in Syria.

All lies, all the time, and now we Americans are supposed to believe that the Biden Administration is seeking to benefit us? Online one wag quipped that “The party that believes that men can get pregnant now wants to control ‘misinformation’ on the internet?” Never forget that policies that compel all Americans to behave in certain ways, no matter how innocent in appearance, can also be used and expanded upon to mandate something more sinister.

And what about the social media companies? Facebook has long had a censorship group headed by a former Israeli government official. CEO Mark Zuckerberg [has admitted](#) to Congress that Facebook suppresses nearly all so-called “*hate speech*” automatically using computer algorithms that rely on word associations to determine what is allowed on the site. Pieces that are considered borderline are allowed only limited exposure, having their distribution among contacts automatically restricted and disabling sharing. Google search uses similar algorithms to make sure that sites and individuals that it does not approve of do not appear among search results. It also uses software to actually “re-direct” users away from sites that it does not approve.

And now PayPal, owned by online auction service eBay and an essential tool for small public interest groups’ support, [has now announced that](#) it will henceforth be working with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) [to “fight hate”](#) by cutting off financing of extremist groups. But its definition of “hate,” criticized as highly subjective and inclined to condemn groups disliked by ADL for political reasons, has prompted legitimate concerns about where this all is going. ADL has often been criticized for finding hate virtually everywhere, particularly among conservative white groups. [RT cites](#) a recent [example](#) of such fervor “in response to an article published in Canada’s National Post, which was denounced by the ADL because its author mentioned that one of the 32 US lawmakers supporting a tax reform belonged to a Jewish fraternity.” In short, any discussion of Israel or of the behavior of Jewish individuals and groups in anything but a positive context will be considered “hate” by ADL and PayPal.

Indeed, PayPal and ADL issued a self-serving statement last week which [said](#) “PayPal and ADL will focus on further uncovering and disrupting the financial pipelines that support extremist and hate movements,” adding that they would also go after “actors and networks spreading and profiting from all forms of hate and bigotry against any community.”

The joint venture will also include the “launch[ing] of a research effort” to determine how “extremist and hate movements throughout the US are attempting to leverage financial platforms to fund criminal activity.” The negative information collected will be shared with police, financial services, and the government, presumably to create an environment where such groups will be marginalized and shut out of the public space completely, to include possibly having their supporters arrested, charged and convicted.

The growing collusion between big government and large public-accessible online information and opinion services is not a good thing. It permits those well-funded and politically connected organizations to work together to limit what the public is allowed to know. Its zeal to eliminate “misinformation” is misplaced, replacing dissident voices that have limited access to a wider audience with massive agenda driven public-private organizations that will essentially determine what is acceptable and what is not. If allowed to continue, it will be the death of free speech in this country as everything that disagrees with the approved narrative will be labeled “hateful” or “extremist,” eventually to include criminal penalties for those who disagree. It is not too much to suggest that we are witnessing the first steps in the creation of a totalitarian *de facto* one-party state. Perhaps that is the intention.

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