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US gov't, social media, Stanford University censored true COVID-19 info: Twitter Files

Report says Twitter, Google, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok among major companies 'onboard' with plan

Darren Lyn | 17.03.2023 - Update : 17.03.2023



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New information released Friday on the Twitter Files revealed that the US government and major social media companies worked hand-in-hand with Stanford University to censor or limit true information about COVID-19.



"The Virality Project in 2021 worked with government to launch a pan-industry monitoring plan for Covid-related content," tweeted independent journalist Matt Taibbi. "At least six major Internet platforms were 'onboarded' ... daily sending millions of items for review."



The goal of the project, created by Stanford University, was to identify people on social media who said things about COVID-19 that the government did not want them to say.

"Though the Virality Project reviewed content on a mass scale for Twitter, Google/YouTube, Facebook/Instagram, Medium, TikTok, and Pinterest, it knowingly targeted true material and legitimate political opinion, while often being factually wrong itself," Taibbi continued.

This latest revelation expands what the American public has already been informed about the lengths to which the federal government and large tech companies went to censor COVID-19 information.

"The Virality Project was a smash success," said Taibbi. "Government, academia, and an

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then asked to censor or restrict the visibility of that speech.

"It accelerated the evolution of digital censorship, moving it from judging truth/untruth to a new, scarier model, openly focused on political narrative at the expense of fact," added Taibbi, who gave an example of Twitter's involvement with The Virality Project (VP).

"VP told Twitter that 'true stories that could fuel hesitancy,' including things like 'celebrity deaths after vaccine' or the closure of a central NY school due to reports of post-vaccine illness, should be considered 'Standard Vaccine Misinformation on Your Platform,'" said Taibbi.

Taibbi also noted that The Virality Project was specifically not based on "assertions of fact," but rather "public submission to authority, acceptance of narrative, and pronouncements by figures like Anthony Fauci" who was the chief medical advisor for former president Donald Trump who disseminated the majority of America's COVID-19 information during the height of the pandemic.

"Even in its final report, VP claimed it was misinformation to suggest the vaccine does not prevent transmission, or that governments are planning to introduce vaccine passports," added Taibbi. "Both things turned out to be true."

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