

Trump infuriates Twitter and threatens to shut down social media

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Body

US President Donald Trump reacted angrily yesterday after Twitter first placed a fact-checking warning on some of its tweets, marking an escalation in tensions between the Silicon Valley company and its most famous user.

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The social network added a label to two tweets in which Trump- who publicly fights with state governors who want to encourage mail-in voting as a way to allow more people to vote during the coronavirus pandemic - falsely claimed that mailed ballots are "fraudulent" and that would lead to a "manipulated choice."

Now under the tweets is a link that says "Get the facts about ballots by mail", which directs users to a page with news articles, tweets and a data box that suggests that the statement is unfounded.

This provoked an angry reaction from the president on Twitter itself. "Republicans feel that social media platforms completely silence conservative voices. We're going to regulate them firmly, or close them before we can allow this to happen," Trump wrote in a tweet yesterday morning.

The U.S. president has made similar threats before, but so far any attempt to regulate large tech companies has stumbled due to a lack of support between parties.

The move comes six months before the U.S. presidential election and marks the first time Twitter tries to verify the platform president's use of conveying controversial statements. The move prompted an immediate setback for Trump and his re-election campaign.

"Twitter is now interfering in the 2020 presidential election. They say my statement on mail ballots... it's incorrect, based on fact-checking fake news from CNN and Amazon Washington Post," the president wrote on Twitter. "Twitter completely suppresses THE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, and I, as president, will not allow this to happen!" he added.

Brad Parscale, the head of Trump's presidential campaign, accused Twitter of showing "a clear political bias," adding, "We always knew Silicon Valley would do everything possible to obstruct and interfere with President Trump by getting his message to voters."

Twitter said: "These tweets... contain potentially misleading information about voting processes and were tagged to provide additional context around mail ballots."

The action came after a weekend of political controversy around Trump's tweets, primarily because of his advocacy of an unfounded conspiracy theory about the death of a former Joe Scarborough staff member, the former Republican member of Congress who became a television presenter and critic of Trump.

Twitter has refused to remove the president's tweets on the subject, despite receiving a letter from Timothy Klausutis, the grieving husband of the former staff member, imploring the company to do so.

The company has long faced problems with the president. She was even criticized for not taking strong action against Trump's tweets that appeared to violate her guidelines, while the president and other conservative figures accuse the censorship platform.

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Last year, Twitter announced that it would attach warnings to tweets from prominent political leaders if they are deemed to violate the company's policies on threats and harassment. However, he was criticized for not doing so in January, after Trump wrote in a tweet that the congressman Democrat Adam Schiff "still doesn't pay the price" for leading the political trial investigation against the president.

This week's decision on Tuesday came "in line" with the steps announced by the firm earlier this month to add tags with additional context to coronavirus-related claims that are "challenged or misleading," as well as other confusing claims, Twitter said.

At the time, Trump said he would cut federal funds from Michigan and Nevada if his (Democratic) governors went ahead with plans to encourage mail-in voting amid the pandemic.

AND BESIDES

REGISTERS NASDAQ SALES WAVE

A wave of sales of technology papers dragged down to the S&P; 500 and the Nasdaq yesterday, cautiously in markets as well as increased tension between the U.S. and China. At 14:39 hours, the Dow Jones Industrial Average gained 177.27 points, or 0.71%, the S&P; 500 lost 2.28 points, or 0.08%, and the Nasdaq Composite yielded 116.61 points, or 1.25%.

Amazon, Microsoft and Facebook, who have led a recent escalation, stolen the Nasdaq, which has a strong technology component. In the S&P;, the health and technology sector also operated in red.

THREAT HITS INDUSTRY TITLES

However, concerns about the Chinese-American relationship have kept new progress limited. President Donald Trump said Washington will announce its response to China's planned national security legislation in Hong Kong ahead of the weekend. While Facebook and Twitter lost 2.6% and 2.3%, respectively, after Trump threatened to shut down social media companies because Twitter urged readers to check their tweets.

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