

2020 ELECTIONS

Trump shares doctored video of Biden with ‘manipulated media’ Twitter tag

The social media platform has taken a more aggressive approach in recent months to countering misleading posts by the president.



President Donald Trump. | Alex Brandon/AP Photo

By **QUINT FORGEY**
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President Donald Trump on Wednesday shared a doctored video of Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden that was flagged by Twitter, the latest instance of the White House and its allies spreading misinformation online.

Shortly after midnight, Trump [retweeted](#) a segment of Biden’s [speech](#) Tuesday in Florida, where the former vice president sought to rally Latino voters alongside celebrity surrogates such as Luis Fonsi, the Puerto Rican-American singer.

During the campaign event, Biden began playing Fonsi’s hit 2017 song “Despacito” from what appeared to be his mobile phone, raising the device to his lectern’s microphones and bobbing his head along to the music.

But in the edited video retweeted by the president — which Twitter [labeled](#) as “manipulated media” — the song played by Biden is the 1988 protest rap “F--- tha Police” by the hip hop group N.W.A.

“What is this all about?” Trump wrote in an accompanying message.

He [retweeted](#) the same video again later Wednesday morning, writing: “China is drooling. They can’t believe this!”

Trump also [retweeted](#) another doctored video of Biden’s speech Monday in Delaware, which focused on climate change.

Trump has accused Biden of supporting the defunding of police departments and of being insufficiently tough on rioters at protests against racial injustice and police brutality.

But Biden’s campaign has put forward a criminal justice plan calling for an additional \$300 million in funding to police departments, and he has forcefully condemned all incidents of violence in U.S. cities.

In recent months, Trump’s preferred social media platform has taken a more aggressive approach to countering posts by the president that spread misleading information or violate the platform’s content policies.

Twitter appended [fact-check warnings](#) to a pair of Trump’s tweets in May about mail-in voting, prompting the president to sign an [executive order](#) targeting social media companies.

Later that week, Twitter ran a [warning label](#) on Trump’s tweet stating that “when the looting starts, the shooting starts” — a message the platform said violated its policies on “glorifying violence.”

In June, Twitter [took down](#) a post by Trump featuring two toddlers and altered CNN chyrons after labeling it as “manipulated.” Facebook also removed the post.

Twitter also attached [warning labels](#) to Trump’s tweets earlier this month urging his supporters to cast two ballots in the November election.

In the run-up to Election Day, Twitter has rolled out a slate of new policies specifically intended to thwart misinformation related to voting, the election’s results and the intensifying White House race.

The platform announced last month that it would [expand its rules](#) against misleading information about mail-in ballots and early voting.

After coming under criticism for not doing enough to stop the spread of deceptive clips targeting Biden’s campaign, Twitter also announced in August that it would begin [displaying warning labels](#) on shared posts that feature misleading or doctored videos.

And amid concerns that Trump might claim himself to be the winner on election night before the final vote is counted, Twitter announced last week that it would [label or remove](#) posts prematurely declaring victory.

Several of the president’s closest allies, including his children, have also shared political misinformation on social media.

Trump’s personal attorney Rudy Giuliani [retweeted](#) a doctored video of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi slurring her words last year.

In July, Twitter [restricted](#) Donald Trump Jr.’s account after determining the president’s eldest son had violated its policies against spreading misinformation about the coronavirus pandemic.

He was apparently penalized for sharing a video of a Houston doctor promoting the antimalarial drug hydroxychloroquine as a Covid-19 cure and discouraging the use of face masks.

After the president also retweeted an excerpt of the doctor’s remarks, Twitter flagged the post and removed it from his feed.

In August, Twitter [removed](#) a video shared by Eric Trump, the president’s other adult son, citing copyright violations. The clip showed the faces of the president and some of his supporters superimposed over the bodies of University of North Carolina basketball players and coaches.

Also last month, Twitter [flagged as manipulated media](#) a tweet shared by the account for the Trump campaign’s rapid response “war room,” which posted a deceptively clipped video of Biden mockingly quoting Trump’s claim, “You won’t be safe in Joe Biden’s America.”

Twitter similarly [flagged](#) a video shared by House Minority Whip Steve Scalise (R-La.) that featured a doctored exchange between Biden and progressive health care activist Ady Barkan.