

White House condemns Elon Musk's 'abhorrent' antisemitic tweets

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Joe Biden has excoriated Elon Musk's "abhorrent" tweets two days after the X owner posted his full-throated agreement with an antisemitic post. A statement from the White House issued on Friday said: "We condemn this abhorrent promotion of antisemitic and racist hate in the strongest terms, which runs against our core values as Americans." Musk sparked backlash with his own tweets responding to a user who accused Jewish people of "hating white people" and showing indifference to antisemitism. "You have said the actual truth," Musk tweeted in reply. X users, including many in the tech industry, lambasted the posts, though other users agreed with Musk and said they were gleefully watching him sink into their hateful worldview. The White House's statement continued: "It is unacceptable to repeat the hideous lie behind the most fatal act of antisemitism in American history at any time, let alone one month after the deadliest day for the Jewish people since the Holocaust." The condemnation from the White House capped off a week of controversy for X, formerly Twitter. The night before, IBM announced it would stop advertising on X after a report said its ads were appearing alongside material praising Adolf Hitler and Nazis. IBM made the decision in response to a report by the liberal advocacy group Media Matters that found ads from IBM, Apple, Oracle, NBCUniversal's Bravo network and Comcast had been placed next to antisemitic material on X. Musk called Media Matters an "evil organization". Another study conducted by the Tech Transparency project documented how premium X subscribers, who receive blue and white verification checkmarks, were exploiting the Israel-Hamas conflict to spread antisemitism and Islamophobia. "IBM has zero tolerance for hate speech and discrimination and we have immediately suspended all advertising on X while we investigate this entirely unacceptable situation," the company's statement read. The European Commission likewise announced it would pause ads on the social network due to "an alarming increase in disinformation and hate speech". The platform's CEO, Linda Yaccarino, attempted to do damage control after Musk's Thursday post, though she did not say his name or reference his tweet. The accounts that Media Matters found posting antisemitic material will no longer be monetizable and the specific posts will be labeled "sensitive media", according to a statement from X on Friday. "X's point of view has always been very clear that discrimination by everyone should STOP across the board – I think that's something we can and should all agree on," Yaccarino said in a tweet. Yaccarino was hired by Musk to rebuild ties with advertisers who fled after he took over, concerned that his easing of content restrictions was allowing hateful and toxic speech to flourish and that would harm their brands. "When it comes to this platform – X has also been extremely clear about our efforts to combat antisemitism and discrimination. There's no place for it anywhere in the world – it's ugly and wrong. Full stop," Yaccarino said. Musk has faced accusations of tolerating antisemitic messages on the platform since purchasing it in November 2022, and the content on X has faced increased scrutiny since the war between Israel and

Hamas began last month, with fake videos and disinformation proliferating. Musk also said on Wednesday that the Anti-Defamation League, a Jewish civil rights non-profit, was fomenting hatred. The ADL has previously accused Musk of allowing antisemitism and hate speech to spread on the platform, and of amplifying the messages of neo-Nazis and white supremacists who want to ban the group. In response, Musk has cultivated a months-long feud with the organization and threatened to sue. The ADL's CEO, Jonathan Greenblatt, decried Musk's endorsement of the antisemitic conspiracy, writing: "At a time when antisemitism is exploding in America and surging around the world, it is indisputably dangerous to use one's influence to validate and promote antisemitic theories. #NeverIsNow." Another anti-extremism organization, The Center for Countering Digital Hate, filed a motion to dismiss a lawsuit brought by X on Thursday, calling the suit "riddled with legal deficiencies". X accused the center of violating its terms of service, which the organization said was a thinly veiled rejoinder for its criticism of the social network. Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel's prime minister, said in a September meeting with the Twitter owner that he hoped Musk could find a way to roll back antisemitism and other forms of hatred within the limits of the first amendment.