
Trump salutes his 'keyboard warriors,' but has he actually curtailed corporate online censorship?

By: RT
15/05/2020



President Donald Trump has paid his respects to the legions of online meme-makers and “keyboard warriors” who helped him get elected. But among these netizens, many feel the president hasn’t done enough to fight online censorship.

“Thank you to all of my great Keyboard Warriors,” Trump tweeted on Friday. “You are better, and far more brilliant, than anyone on Madison Avenue (Ad Agencies). There is nobody like you!”

Trump barreled into the White House nearly four years ago, his campaign propped up by droves of these “keyboard warriors.” From the meme-makers and trolls of 4Chan to a fanatically loyal base of Twitter fans, Trump essentially enlisted the help of a massive and decentralized ad agency.

Videos chronicling his debate performances and savage put-downs racked up [millions of views](#), and Trump – along with his son Donald Jr – often retweeted this user-created content. Hillary Clinton [had](#) Madison Avenue’s best ad agencies; Donald Trump had [Pepe](#) the frog.

Four years later, Trump’s online supporters are still churning out content for their hero, and the mainstream media is still clutching its pearls over some of these off-color memes. Late last year, for example, the collective establishment media melted down for a solid week when a group of Trump supporters published a video showing a likeness of the president “murdering” his political opponents.

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Some of these pro-Trump s**tposters [responded](#) with glee when Trump gave them a shout-out on Friday. But for others, Trump’s words were empty platitudes. “Your supporters are being censored on social media every day. Please help put an end to tech censorship!” controversial right-winger Nick Fuentes [replied](#).

"You've got to do something about censorship or there won't be any left on social media by the time the RNC comes around," pro-Trump pundit Cassandra Fairbanks [tweeted](#).

The tech giants of Silicon Valley have long been accused of censoring conservative and right-wing content. Conspiracy theorist Alex Jones, right-wing provocateur Milo Yiannopoulos, and 'Proud Boys' founder Gavin McInnes are three big names among hundreds banned from multiple social media platforms since Trump's election. Additionally, leaks from inside these companies reveal an anti-Trump bias at the top. Google's executives, for example, [encouraged](#) their employees to protest against Trump, [blacklisted](#) right-wing news sites and blogs, and openly [discussed](#) deploying artificial intelligence to fight *"populism."*

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Trump acknowledged his supporters' concerns before, inviting a crowd of friendly social media stars to a White House summit last summer. During the meeting, he declared free speech to be *"the bedrock of American life,"* and promised to haul the *"corporate gatekeepers"* of Silicon Valley to Washington for a scolding.

The president drafted an [executive order](#) a month later, which would penalize tech firms for squelching free speech. However, the mechanics of this order were never leaked, and the order was never given. The Justice Department also mulled an [antitrust investigation](#) – unrelated to the censorship issue – into these tech companies last year, yet no such probe has been launched.

As this year's election draws closer, Trump's dedicated army of memers and trolls will again function as an informal advertising agency. However, should their candidate fail, they will likely blame Big Tech, and ask why the president didn't take action earlier.
