

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

INTERVIEW OF: [REDACTED]

Tuesday, May 16, 2023

Washington, D.C.

The interview in the above matter was held in room 2237, Rayburn House Office Building, commencing at 9:59 a.m.

Present: Representatives Jordan and Gaetz.

A That's right.

Q Now, I want to talk a little bit about some of the government agencies and groups that you discussed earlier.

You talked about the FBI's Foreign Influence Task Force.

A Uh-huh.

Q Is Meta's participation in the task force voluntary?

A So just to clarify, so the task force, my understanding, is an organization within the FBI. Our interactions with the task force are voluntary to my knowledge.

Q Okay. Thank you. And I appreciate that clarification.

A You're welcome.

Q Did anyone from the FBI or any other government agency ever tell Meta that it was required to meet with the task force or engage with them in any way?

A Not to my knowledge.

Q Why does Meta interact with the task force?

A As I mentioned, we have a core business interest in countering this type of activity.

And I think something you'd also referenced earlier is these operations are often inherently cross-platform and inherently off-platform, and our visibility as a technology platform company is, I think reasonably should be, cabins to activity on our platforms.

And so other entities -- the FBI is a good example of that -- may have more insight into aspects of these operations as they occur off of our platform or on other parts of the internet.

And so it is in our interest to have that line of communication to find out more about an operation that might -- maybe it didn't attack Facebook but is trying to target Facebook where we just wouldn't have that visibility ourselves.

Q Okay. So it helps Meta and Facebook to ensure the security of your platforms to participate in these relationships.

A That's correct.

██████████: Okay. And if we could have just a minute.

[Discussion off the record.]

BY ██████████:

Q So you stated earlier that when Meta receives information about accounts that potentially violate its CIB policy, it never takes action without conducting its own investigation, correct?

A To my knowledge, in the areas I work on, that's our process, yes.

Q Okay. And if you receive a tip from a government agency, such as the FBI or the State Department, it's Meta that determines whether or not an enforcement action is going to be taken, not the government, correct?

A That's correct, yes, pursuant to our own internal investigative findings.

Q And sometimes, as you discussed, Meta does conclude that the account that was flagged for them by the FBI or the State Department is in violation of its CIB policy and it will remove that network.

A That's correct.

Q And when that happens, again, that's Meta's decision, not the government's.

A That's correct, based on our own internal investigative findings.

Q Okay. And you were asked if you can remember specific examples of instances where you, Meta, received a tip from a government agency that Meta determined did not rise to the level of CIB.

And if I recall correctly, you were not able to remember specifics but you do know that that did happen, that there were instances when it happened. You just can't

remember the specifics of the investigation.

A That is correct, yes.

Q Okay. And, again, in those instances, it would be Meta making its own determination that the tip did not produce evidence sufficient to conclude that a network or a group of accounts were engaged in CIB.

A That's correct, yes.

Q And if there's no violation, then Meta takes no action against the account, even if it's been flagged for you, if there's no violation of your terms of service or your community standards.

A That would be correct, yes.

Q To your knowledge, has anyone in the FBI or the State Department or any other government agency ordered Meta to take down an account, page, or other content?

A Not to my knowledge.

Q And to your knowledge, has anyone in the FBI or any other government agency tried to coerce or pressure Meta into taking an account down or other content?

A Again, not to my knowledge.

Q And there are limits to Meta's willingness to cooperate with the government, correct?

So, for example, if the government requests information from Meta or from your team that requires legal process to provide, Meta will not provide that information unless it receives the correct legal process, correct?

A That would be my understanding, yes.

Q Okay. And Meta will not share the methods and the algorithms it uses to detect CIB in its internal investigations with the government, correct?

A Yes, that's my understanding, yes.

Q That's proprietary information that Meta is unwilling to share.

A I wouldn't know the specific reason why, but my understanding is we wouldn't share that information.

Q Fair enough.

And you spoke earlier about how Meta's CIB policy is -- I believe the phrase you used was "content agnostic." Is that another way of saying it's content neutral?

A The reason I say "content agnostic" is because contents isn't a factor in our investigation.

Q Okay.

A It's not something we spend time reviewing or assessing to make the policy determination.

Q And I believe you made this clear, but CIB networks can be engaged in this coordinated inauthentic behavior even if the content that their accounts are posting is accurate.

A That -- well, that's correct, right. The content can be benign, right, something completely unrelated.

Q Like puppies or kittens.

A Correct. But if the network itself is engaged in deceptive behavior then yeah.

Q Okay. And, again, you target -- so you target the deceptive behavior of hiding the identity or the location of who's running that account.

A That's correct.

Q Regardless of what they're posting.

A That's correct.