

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

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

INTERVIEW OF: [REDACTED]

Monday, June 26, 2023

Washington, D.C.

The interview in the above matter was held in room 2237, Rayburn House Office Building, commencing at 10:00 a.m.

1 merits, independently of course, and if it does have merits, take the right actions.

2 Q And with respect to your role specifically, you received that information
3 from stakeholders such as the GEC, correct?

4 A Yes, that would happen on a regular basis as part of my role.

5 Q And then you would pass it along to the proper team?

6 A That was normal procedure, yes.

7 Q Okay. And then after that, what was your role?

8 A Depending on the issue at stake, certainly, I would not be involved in making
9 a final determination as to whether the claim, whichever claim it was, had merits, but
10 once the determination was made and an action was taken, I may or may not be asked to
11 report back to the entity in question. More often than not, we would not necessarily
12 report back, but that could happen.

13 Q With respect to the GEC specifically, did your interactions -- did you interact
14 with the GEC during both the Trump administration and the Biden administration?

15 A Again, to my recollection, interactions began in the summer or spring of
16 2020. So that would be, I believe, during the Trump administration.

17 Q And did they continue on after January 20, 2021, to your recollection?

18 A I believe they did. Again, it was a series of engagements, roughly on a
19 monthly basis, I believe, but I'm not sure exactly when they ended. I believe they
20 continued in the Biden administration.

21 Q To the best of your recollection, was there any difference in your
22 interactions during the Trump administration versus during the Biden administration with
23 the GEC?

24 A To my recollection, none whatsoever.

25 Q Okay.

1 During your interactions with individuals from the GEC, did anyone who was a
2 State Department employee ever try to coerce you or anyone else at Google into
3 promoting or removing any content?

4 A With the understanding that, again, "coercing" is a term that is somewhat
5 subjective, it has certainly been my experience that we would receive information from
6 GEC that they shared with us but that they always marked as for our consideration, as
7 opposed to requesting, as far as I recall, or otherwise mandating any sort of an outcome.

8 Q Okay.

9 Did any GEC employee or any State Department employee writ large ever
10 threaten you or any other Google employee, to the best of your knowledge, with any
11 adverse action if Google did not act on particular information they had provided?

12 A Again, "threatening" is a broad term, but, to my recollection, when there
13 was any other interaction than during these meetings -- and those meetings were focused
14 on either them asking questions to us about our practices and their taking no for an
15 answer if our answer was that we did not have a response for them, or raising
16 information to us with this for-awareness purpose that I mentioned before, but otherwise
17 no.

18 Q Okay.

19 Did any GEC official or any State Department official writ large ever ask you or, I
20 guess, to the best of your knowledge, any other Google employee to promote or remove
21 any content based on the political or ideological viewpoint that it expressed?

22 A To my recollection, no. And that would've been a strong departure from
23 normal procedure, so I believe I would recall that.

24 Q And when you say it would be a strong departure from normal procedure,
25 what does that mean?

1 A That means that I'm not used, in my role, to receiving requests to elevate or
2 remove content based on its political leaning.

3 Q Okay.

4 Did you have any interactions with anybody at the White House?

5 A I'm sorry to say --

6 ██████████: You're asking over the same time period, 2018 to 2020?

7 ██████████: Yeah, 2018 to -- before you -- you took your new position in January
8 of this year, correct.

9 ██████████: Yeah.

10 ██████████: So 2018 through the end of last year.

11 ██████████: Okay.

12 ██████████: I appreciate you asking me.

13 I should note that, because many of my meetings at the time were remote and
14 over visual conference, I'm not entirely sure that I have a clear recollection of who I
15 interacted with. I don't recall going to the White House, if that makes sense, but I don't
16 recall all of my meetings.

17 BY ██████████:

18 Q Okay. And as we established earlier, you had so many interactions it's
19 impossible to quantify the number of stakeholders you engaged with, right?

20 A I certainly do not recall the number.

21 Q Okay.

22 Are you familiar with the claim made by -- I think it was raised at the very
23 beginning today and also made writ large in other hearings that we've had by some of the
24 committee's Republicans -- that the Federal Government has colluded with Google and
25 other private companies to censor certain types of political and ideological speech?

1 A And when you say "familiar," you mean am I aware of it?

2 Q Yes.

3 A Then, yes, I have awareness of the claim.

4 Q Based on your experience, personal experience at Google, do you have any
5 experience with such collusion actually taking place?

6 A In my experience, Google across its range of services through the years has
7 consistently made its own independent decisions with regards to what policies, practices,
8 or product development it designs.

9 Q Thank you.

10 And I just want to go through -- you answered a number of these questions
11 earlier, but I just want a clean record on it.

12 In your current role at Google, meaning the role you've been in since January of
13 this year to the present, are you personally involved in making content moderation
14 decisions?

15 A In my current role, I do not have the responsibility or possibility to make
16 content moderation decisions, meaning decisions about individual cases of content.

17 Q In your immediate prior role, so 2018 to December of last year, were you
18 involved in making content moderation decisions?

19 A Same answer. I would not have had the responsibility or possibility of
20 making individual decisions about pieces of content.

21 Q And what about the roles you had prior to 2018? Were you ever in a
22 position to make content moderation decisions?

23 A Same answer as before. I did not have that possibility.

24 Q Okay.

25 In your current role at Google, do you personally engage in fact-checking?