

Why is the World Socialist Web Site still blacklisted on the Reddit r/coronavirus and r/politics forums?

Kevin Reed
14 June 2021

Content from the *World Socialist Web Site* remains blacklisted and blocked from being shared on some of the most popular discussion forums on the social news aggregation website Reddit.

Among the Reddit forums—known as subreddits—that have banned the posting of article links from *wsws.org* are r/coronavirus with 2.4 million members and r/politics with 7.6 million members.

Content moderators of these subreddits have blacklisted the *World Socialist Web Site* without explanation and refused to respond to multiple WSWS exposures of the ban as political censorship and the demand that it be lifted.

Any attempt to post articles from the WSWS on the r/coronavirus subreddit returns the following message:

“Your submission has been automatically removed because the linked source may not be reliable or may be dedicated mostly to political coverage. If possible, please re-submit with a link to a reliable or non-political source, such as a reliable news organization or an [sic] recognized institution.”

In the first place, the argument that only links from a “non-political source” are permitted is entirely illegitimate given that links shared freely from the capitalist media such as the *Washington Post*, *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* on the forum are in fact “dedicated mostly to political coverage.” The real purpose of this language from Reddit moderators is McCarthyism—i.e., banning of left-wing and socialist ideas from being shared and discussed on the subreddit.

Secondly the argument that the *World Socialist Web Site* is not a “reliable source” or “a reliable news organization” or a “recognized institution” is completely false. While our daily readership continues to climb internationally, the original, unique and consistently

accurate reporting and analysis of the WSWS—especially on the subject of the coronavirus pandemic—has become increasingly influential and is playing a direct role in shaping public views on the topic

In light of the recent campaign by the WSWS to expose the revival by the US corporate media and political establishment of the discredited “Wuhan Lab” theory—which has been shared widely on Twitter and been supported by leading scientists and epidemiologists—the continuation of the ban by Reddit moderators on r/coronavirus is a blatant attempt to stop our views and analysis from reaching the members of the forum.

For example, the WSWS article written by Andre Damon on June 1 entitled, “Author of Wall Street Journal ‘Wuhan Lab’ story wrote lies about ‘Weapons of Mass Destruction’”—which exposed the fact that Michael R. Gordon wrote the September 8, 2002, article in the *New York Times* that falsely asserted that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein was seeking to build a nuclear weapon—was shared by at least 29 journalists on Twitter.

Among the publications that reporters who shared this article on Twitter write for are *Nature*, *Forbes*, *Bloomberg*, *Rolling Stone* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Yet the moderators of the r/coronavirus subreddit have refused to lift their blacklist.

This writer submitted a message through the r/coronavirus subreddit directly to the moderators pointing to the decisive role being played by the WSWS in combatting the discredited “Wuhan Lab” conspiracy theory, and this message resulted in the following six-word response “Nope, but thanks for the feedback.”

In the case of the subreddit r/politics, the *World Socialist Web Site* remains blacklisted while more than 1,000 other publications, including far-right organizations and open advocates of lies about the origin of COVID-19,

are officially whitelisted by the moderators.

For example, Fox News—which has launched a spurious campaign to have NIAID Director Anthony Fauci fired—and the *Federalist*—which advocated early in the pandemic that infected people engage in “chicken pox parties” to infect others—are both permitted to have links from their sites posted on r/politics.

Efforts by WSWS editors and journalists to submit requests through the subreddit facility to add the *World Socialist Web Site* domain to the r/politics whitelist have gone unanswered.

As we reported last September, when the WSWS article “Trump runs for Führer” inexplicably made it past the blacklist on r/politics on August 28, it quickly won 9,200 upvotes, received over 600 comments, and was so popular that it was elevated to Reddit’s front page.

At that moment the r/politics moderators’ censorship regime sprang into action, labeled the article—analyzing Trump’s fascistic nomination acceptance speech at the 2020 Republican National Convention—as coming from an “Unacceptable Source” and shut down further discussion by Reddit members of the analysis.

There is no question that Reddit—an estimated \$6 billion corporation owned by the Newhouse media empire called Advance Publications—and its subreddit moderators are deliberately blocking members of the platform from having access to and discussing content from the WSWS.

We are renewing our call for an end to the McCarthyite blacklisting of WSWS content from being shared on Reddit. We are also calling on Reddit members to demand that the moderators of r/coronavirus and r/politics lift the ban and allow the socialist analysis and reporting from the WSWS to be shared on these subreddits.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact