

Twitter/X purges, then restores accounts of journalists and left-wing opponents of Israeli genocide in Gaza

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Early Tuesday, the social media platform X (formerly Twitter) shut down without explanation the accounts of an unknown number of prominent journalists and left-wing users opposed to the Israeli genocide in Gaza.

Although the accounts were restored later in the morning, X has yet to provide an explanation for why they were purged in the first place.

The locked accounts all had a label on their profile pages saying, “Account suspended: X suspends accounts that violate the Our Rules.” The specific rule or rules purportedly violated were not provided.

In an Instagram post on Tuesday morning, the senior staff writer and podcaster for Mint Press News, Alan MacLeod, revealed that his X account had been shut down. Through his writing, podcasts and social media activity, MacLeod has consistently exposed the lies of pro-Israeli propaganda that is justifying the massacre of civilians in Gaza.

MacLeod wrote, “Today, without warning or explanation, Twitter suspended my account, @AlanRMacLeod. They told me to check my email for a reason, but no email has been forthcoming.”

The Mint Press News journalist continued, “I have never even remotely been involved in any controversy/been reported/been stuck in Twitter jail before, so I assume the real reason is political, especially as high-profile leftists accounts like Rob Rousseau and Zei_Squirrel were also targeted today.”

Rob Rousseau is a left-wing writer and podcaster from Montreal, Canada. He has 97,800 followers on Twitter/X and hosts a podcast called “The Insurgents.” Zei_Squirrel has 215,000 Twitter/X followers and says that it exposes “Western media and political class propaganda, with a focus on

imperialism.”

Zei_Squirrel wrote on another platform, “Elon Musk’s Twitter just banned me, without giving any reason. I didn’t get any post that was flagged, no infraction, no warning, nothing. So, I suspect it is because I have been exposing the propaganda of the genocidal Israeli regime and its supporters, including recently Bill Ackman.”

Many of the suspended accounts had been engaged in an exposure of the right-wing billionaire Ackman, the hedge fund manager who led the campaign to oust Claudine Gay as president of Harvard University over pro-Palestinian political activity on the university campus that was falsely characterized as “antisemitic.”

The account of the Texas Observer’s Special Investigative Correspondent, Steven Monacelli, was also suspended on Tuesday. Monacelli has written extensively on the rise of neo-fascism and on pro-Palestinian protests within the US directed against the Biden administration.

When he was asked about the suspension by The Daily Dot, Monacelli said, “I haven’t received any communications from Twitter/X about why I have been suspended. I can’t think of anything I’ve posted lately that would be worthy of suspension. Although I have written multiple critical reports about Twitter/X and Elon Musk in recent months.”

Monacelli also told Gizmodo, “Yes, I have made posts critical of Israel’s targeting of civilians and journalists, and have shared news about pro-Palestinian protests, but I have also recently made posts and shared news debunking antisemitism disguised as criticism of Israel.”

Other known accounts that were suspended include

those of Ken Klippenstein, reporter for The Intercept with 505,000 followers, TrueAnon, a left-wing politics and news podcast with 152,500 followers, Liam Nissan, a left-wing social media activist with 242,000 followers, and Ryan Shead, an anti-MAGA podcaster and social media publisher with 91,000 followers.

Although there is no indication that the account suspensions were initiated directly by Elon Musk, the politics of those being censored were opposed to the fascistic rantings of the billionaire private owner of the platform.

Musk, who has a history of handling customer service questions for prominent conservative users, responded by posting, “I will investigate. Obviously, it is ok to be critical of anything, but it is not ok to call for extreme violence, as that is illegal.” He then added, “For the record, I do not personally agree with your views. Nonetheless, the point of freedom of speech is allowing those whose views you disagree with to express those views.”

The temporary suspension of the accounts of social media activists and journalists opposed to the Israeli genocide in Gaza and the emergence of far-right and fascist political movements in the US is warning that methods of online censorship are being tested.

This trial balloon at Twitter/X takes place within the context of a series of recent censorship moves against voices opposed to the criminal Israeli onslaught on Gaza that has now killed upwards of 30,000 people, most of them women and children.

On Christmas Eve, Meta-owned Instagram terminated the account of political activist Shaun King, who has denounced the war crimes being committed by Israel with the backing of the Biden administration. On December 21, a post by award-winning actress Susan Sarandon was flagged with a visibility warning on X as possibly containing “violent speech.” The post was promoting a protest in New York City and said, “Stop the Bombs! Workers Demand Peace and Justice for Palestine! Ceasefire Now!”



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