

Open Letter on Big Tech Censorship and the Cancel Culture

To Every Elected Official Who Still Loves Freedom

December 1, 2020

Dear Elected Representatives of “We the People”:

We American citizens have been blessed with the brilliant ideals and vision of the Founding Fathers and the US Constitution that have given all of us the great good fortune to live in what is now the freest country in the world.

But, as you know, **Big Tech is taking those freedoms away.** This letter to you—**our representatives whom we elected**—is meant to share the perspective of “ordinary citizens.” The elites who control big tech are members of an oligarchy who have contempt for us, the “**hoi polloi**,” the “**great unwashed**,” the “**basket of deplorables**.” But their pride precedes their inevitable fall, much like the humiliating crash of Goliath. Of course, none of this is news to most of you.

Here is a “citizen’s view” of the current climate of censorship and the cancel culture as it relates to access to Internet platforms and the wider array of professional and business services that have—up until the recent past—been available to all individuals, without regard to their race, religion, or politics. The following is what I hope is a commonsense view of these issues that cuts through all of the legalese and propaganda coming from the Totalitarian Left.

1. Big Tech Runs Internet *Platforms* Which Must Be Censorship Free

Think of Ma Bell and the telephone lines, which now include cell phones. Can you imagine how horrifying it will be if Verizon and other companies start canceling customers because they’re conservatives? This is the easiest way to look at the Big Tech Internet platforms. On phone lines, people can say *whatever they like*. Companies are not supposed to be listening in, and they certainly can’t declare (yet) that John Q. Republican can’t have a phone because of his political views.

Google, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and other social media platforms provide a service to users that exactly mirrors the concept of speech on phone lines. They are *not* publishers because of the enormous scope and nature of their service offerings. For example, Twitter is not a publisher that curates and edits content because a) that is not their product offering, and b) with millions of users, they simply *cannot* legitimately act as an “online magazine.” This is common sense.

Thus, when they ban or suppress free speech, they are acting like publishers on a platform that, by definition, *can’t* allow it, just like the telephone lines. **We must keep Section 230 in place but “force platforms to act like platforms.”**

I don’t think that it’s correct to tell them to: **“stop all censorship, or you’ll be reclassified as publishers.”** They might take you up on that offer, and **that would be terrible for their consumers.** We wouldn’t want phone companies to adopt that model.

Big Tech Internet platforms are *essential services* like phone lines and must be given **one option only**:

Submit to an ongoing quarterly audit that proves all censorship has been removed or incur massive and repetitive fines for violating the same type of free speech laws that protect our phone communications.

2. The Cancel Culture: Companies Must Be Barred From Refusing Service to Conservatives

How many conservatives have been barred from services because of their expressed beliefs? A short list of vendors that have done this includes PayPal, Stripe, Visa, Mastercard, Eventbrite, hotels, banks, and many dozens of other services. Individual citizens must be protected from the virulent intolerance of the Left and its cancel culture that are effectively pushing conservatives into a corner where they cannot function or exist.

Conservatives have already been thrown out of restaurants. What happens when they can’t work, open any bank account, or shop for food? The message from the Left is, **“Go die and be done with it.”** With very narrow First Amendment or other valid exceptions, goods and services must be available to all.

Conclusion

This is an open letter from an ordinary citizen that I believe mirrors the experiences and views of at least half of the citizens of the United States. In fact, I think that a large majority of people who voted for Biden would agree that *they* should enjoy the freedoms that are barred to many conservatives.

They should consider Martin Niemöller’s words about the Nazis:

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

I hope that laws can be passed to address the issues above. I also realize that laws alone will not solve these problems permanently since laws can be changed by a new generation of leftist leaders. However, legislation today will plug the holes in the dikes while we work to change the cultural views of our fellow citizens and new generations of voters. Thank you for all that you do, and may God Bless America!

Respectfully,

Peter Falkenberg Brown

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