

Whither Musk's Twitter

By [Kim Petersen](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#)

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It must be excruciatingly difficult having to decide whether to put some of one's hundreds-of-billions of dollars, along with potential future profit, at risk to affirm one's previous public declaration of support for the freedom of speech principle. That is the [dilemma that Musk has before him](#).

Musk finds Twitter threatened with an advertiser boycott. As I previously [alluded to](#), the boycotters of free speech on Twitter could well find themselves [boycotted by free-speech supporters](#). Two can play the boycott game. Musk seems to realize that now. He warned of a "[thermonuclear name & shame](#)" reprisal against boycotting advertisers.

Musk has [expressed](#) willingness to fight the "activist groups pressuring advertisers" and their compliant advertisers who are "trying to destroy free speech in America."

But has Musk provided a free speech forum for all Twitter users? Yours truly, a small-fry free-speech, anti-racism, anti-war, anti-disinformation sporadic user of Twitter have been banished without notice or reason for several months now. I assume it is for my progressivist principles that are not shared by Democrats working in the Twitter space (e.g., support for Palestinian rights, support for Indigenous rights, support for all human rights, etc).

But changes are afoot at Twitter. Musk has cut the Twitter workforce in half. This is unfortunate for the ordinary workers just trying to earn an honest living; but, as far as cleaning out the anti-free-speech riff raff at Twitter, it might signal an opening for free-speech advocates.

Alas, Musk seems to think free speech shouldn't be "free." [Twitter Blue will only be available](#) to those who can afford the monthly \$8 fee.

Donald Trump (a personality equally reprehensible to **Joe Biden**) has, as far as I know, not been invited for reinstatement to Twitter. I dislike most of Trump's ideological views, but I support his right to express them honestly.

Then there is the case of **Scott Ritter**, an American patriot who comes across as a fierce critic of US imperialism. For his anti-imperialist views, he found himself banned from Twitter. After the takeover of Twitter by Musk, Ritter set up a new Twitter account and sent out a tweet, stating that Ukraine was behind the massacre at Bucha, as a challenge to Musk. Ritter, a former marine intelligence officer, found himself promptly banned from Twitter again.

[Ritter quoted The Who](#): “Won’t get fooled again. Meet the new boss, same as the old boss.”

It is the early days of Twitter under Musk. Nonetheless, if Musk truly is a free speech devotee, truly is a man of principle, then he will use his Twitter ownership for the promotion of respectful free speech.

I submit that Musk might best demonstrate this by setting in motion a twitter storm pushing for the release of Julian Assange, a heroic free-speech advocate and a principled supporter of the public’s [right to know](#).

Assange has suffered at the hands of corrupt American power abetted by its minions for which he should never have been targeted or persecuted. Conversely, [he should be celebrated](#) for his actions which include exposing [US war crimes in Iraq](#). If there is any justice in empire, then Assange must be released, exonerated of all wrongdoing, fairly recompensed, and regarded with all due respect for his sacrifice to humanity — as should all those brave souls who spoke out about the crimes of empire and find themselves languishing under unjust circumstances.

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