

Matt Taibbi Surprised by FBI & Twitter's Collusion; Russiagate Info in Twitter Files

The Joe Rogan experience I have enjoyed your work with the Twitter file I enjoy all your work but I really have enjoyed the Twitter files That has been some really fascinating views behind the curtain I it it's uh it's it's been one of the weirder more surreal experiences of my life because you know as a reporter you you're always um kind of banging away to try to get one little piece of reality Right Like you you might make 30 or 40 phone calls to get one sentence Uh the Twitter files is oh by the way here you know uh take a laptop and look at 50,000 emails you know full of all kinds of stuff And so it's you know for for somebody like me it's like a dream come true We get to see all kinds of things get the answers to questions that uh we've had for years and it's it's been really incredible Has anything been surprising to you Um AAA little bit II I think going into it I I thought that the um that the relationship between the security agencies like the FBI and the DH S and companies like Twitter and Facebook I thought it was a little bit less formal Like I I thought maybe they had kind of an advisory role and what we find is that it's not that it's it's very formalized They have um a really intense structure uh that they've worked out over a period of years where they have regular meetings Um they have a system where the DH S handles um you know censorship requests that come up from the the States and the FBI handles the international ones and they all float all these companies and um it's a big bureaucracy and we I don't think we expected to see that It's very bizarre to me that they that they would just openly call for censorship in emails and these private transmissions but the ones that are easily duplicated you could send them to other people It could it can be easily get out like that They're so comfortable with the idea that the government should be involved in this censorship of what turns out to be true information especially when in regards to the Hunter Biden laptop that they would be so comfortable that they would just send it in emails Yeah Well that I think that shows you the mentality Right Like that they they really genuinely felt that they were impregnable that they don't have anybody to answer to Um I mean a normal person doesn't put incriminating things in emails because we all have the expectation that someday it might come come out you know Uh but these folks didn't act that way I mean they you see I was I was especially shocked by an email from uh a staffer for Adam Schiff the Congress person the

California Congressman And they're just outright saying we would like you to suspend the accounts of this journalist and anybody who retweets information about this committee You know I mean this is this is a con this is a member of Congress right Most of these people have legal backgrounds They they they got lawyers in the office for sure Um And this is the this is the House Intelligence Committee Uh you would think they would have better uh operational security Another moment that was shocking to me there was a um there's an email from an FBI agent uh named Elvis Chan in San Francisco to Twitter and they're setting up this signal group uh which is going to include all the top sort of censorship executives at all the big companies And it's a word document that has all the phone numbers of all these important executives and the email just the subject line reads phone numbers Uh Right And then the word doc is just called secret phone numbers right And I'm thinking this is how they taught you to do it at Quantico really You know I mean like I mean even a journalist can't miss that you know what I'm saying like call it something else You know I I don't know that that that part of it was amazing So strange It's so strange to get such a peek because I don't think anybody ever anticipated that something like this would happen where Twitter would get sold to an eccentric billionaire who's intent on letting all the information get released Yeah I mean I I think Elon Musk essentially he he he spent \$44 billion to become a whistleblower of his own company Uh and I I mean I I don't really fully know his motives in in doing that Um I think he's got a pretty developed sense of humor though Uh and that comes through I think he he gets a kick out of seeing all this stuff come out on Twitter which used to be the kind of the private stomping ground of all of these whiny journalists And now here here is all this information that is just horrifying to all of them Um I mean that's a \$44 billion is a lot to spend on that thrill But uh I'm glad he did Well he truly believes that censored social media is a threat to democracy He really believes that Absolutely Yeah And I believe it too Yeah I just don't have \$44 billion Even if I did I'd be like uh I don't want that heat Right Right Yeah I I don't I don't think that's what I would spend it on But uh no he he he believes that I think he also um I think he also believes that the credibility of these companies um can only be restored by telling people what what they talk about in private or what they have been talking about you know with the government and that sort of thing So um he might be right about that you know Um we'll see I guess I think he is I mean it's gonna be interesting It's going to be interesting to see how this plays out There's an amazing amount

of resistance against him and you know there's the just the publicity campaign against him has been fascinating to watch people go from thinking that Elon Musk is the savior that's bringing us these amazing electric cars and engineering new reusable rockets too He's an alt right piece of shit who wants Donald Trump back in the office And it's like it's very wild the the the speed with which they can sort of shuffle somebody into the Hitler or the Month club uh routine right Like you know we we've always done this with foreigners you know whether it's Noriega or Saddam Hussein or Milosevic or Assad or whatever it is Like we have a playbook for cranking out negative information about um you know foreigners who get in our way for whatever reason But now we we've we've kind of uh refined that technique for domestic people who are inconvenient you know I think they did it with Trump obviously Um you know they try to do it with Tucker Carlson with you Uh You know I mean you got a taste of that for a few a few times right Uh And then you know with with with Elon Yeah he he went from being the guy who made electric cars sexy to like you know something to the right of Victor Orban in in like 10 seconds It's it's amazing It is amazing And the narrative is spread through progressive people Well they'll just say it now It's like they've reached the memo the memos got to them and then they just I hear people in LA I hear people that I know like oh Elon just so crazy It's like it was something happened to him He went nuts and he's a right winger now Like how what are you saying Like what what examples do you have Like they don't have an example They just have this narrative that reached them the signal like Elon bad now Elon bad now Elon bad now Elon bad now And they just start saying it and you go like what what examples are you using of like his behavior Well he let Trump back on the platform OK Well the Taliban's there you didn't have a problem with the Taliban The Taliban just bought blue check marks Do you know that they really they're buying blue check marks so they could be verified Um The the real terrorist the fucking Taliban is on and no one has a problem with it The CCP is on Twitter No one has a problem with it But like Trump they'll let Trump back on Trump is hilarious He's a ridiculous person But don't you think it's better that his tweets get out there and then a bunch of people get to attack him in the tweets And if those tweets that people attack him with are good if people are saying good things then those things get retweeted and liked and then they rise up to the top of the algorithm It's all good Like you you need a voice against someone like that You can't have that guy howling into the wind on some Q and on for him and all those whackos just so they're only

talking to each other with no pushback at all If you really don't like Trump you want him on Twitter you want that guy to have some pushback you want people to be talking against what he's saying You want Twitter the real Twitter now which will actually check everybody They factcheck Biden right They'll they'll fact check him So if he says something stupid they'll go No that's not what's true Here's what's true Right And and that would be good And that was actually for a while Twitter's official policy they had something called the public interest policy which specifically laid out exactly what you said Like when when uh a world leader uh no matter who it is says anything we wanted to be out there because we want it to be debated We want people to see it We wanted people to talk about it We want people to reach conclusions about it And one of the things that we found in the Twitter files was after January 6th They there was this intense debate within the company where uh they were basically saying oh thank God we're going to repeal the public interest policy or we're going to poke a hole in it right Um and no longer have that belief system that just because somebody is a world leader we need to hear what they have to say So they invented a new um AAA new policy called glorification of violence or they they called it that and essentially what they said was you you you had to look at Trump not in terms of each individual tweet Uh but in in terms of what they called the context surrounding his whole career uh all the people who followed him whether or not they were violent whether or not they said the things that were offensive It's like the speech version of stochastic terrorism I don't know if you ever heard that that term It's stochastic terrorism is this idea that um you you can incite people to violence by saying things that aren't specifically inciting but are statistically likely to uh create uh uh you know somebody who will do something violent even if you it's not individually predictable Um and that's what they did with Trump They basically invented this concept that yes he may not have actually incited violence but his whole the whole totality of his persona is is inciting So we're going to strike him And so they so they sort of massively expanded the the purview of what of things they can censor just in that one moment Uh And it was it's you know you can see it in these dialogues how they came to that decision which is just fascinating and they've never come out and said we were misinformed That is not the case There really wasn't this crazy collusion between Russia and Donald Trump And in fact there was some information that seems to point to that Hillary Clinton had involvement with Russia too and that they've kind of all had involvement with Russia and that this this wasn't some grand

conspiracy to elect a Russian puppet as the president of the United States
Sorry Yeah it was it was a 3.5 year sort of mass hysteria experiment right
And I mean this is one of the things uh it it it's one of the reasons I I got kind
of quietly moved out of mainstream journalism right Like I I didn't have a
particular uh problem at Rolling Stone but you know I I early on in the in the
Trump years I I said there's something wrong with the story II I think there
are elements of it that aren't aren't provable I don't think we should be
running this stuff you know And uh then uh before I knew it I was working
independently But anyway uh the Twitter files we we've we're finding stuff
that now tells you absolutely Like what actually the truth was during that
time Like for instance one of the big Russia Gate stories uh was from early
2018 when Devin Nunes remember the he was the Republican Congressman
he was the head of the House Intelligence Committee At the time he wrote a
memo uh basically saying we think they they faked FISA applications We
think the FBI used the steel dossier to try to get surveillance authority against
some Trump people like Carter Page and we think they lied and cheated to
do that And so he submitted this classified memo and not only was he
denounced everywhere as a liar and wrong and all that But there was this big
story that was all over the place that uh a hashtag hashtag release The memo
had been amplified by Russian bots Uh You probably don't remember this
but but this story was everywhere in January and February of 2018 This idea
that that uh released the memo was basically a Russian operation and that
Nunes was uh benefiting from it Well I'm reading the Twitter files I was
looking for something else entirely Uh And then suddenly we come across a
string of emails internally at Twitter where Twit where the Twitter officials
are saying you know we're not finding any Russians at all behind this
Hashtag And we told uh the members of Congress who asked about this um
that there are no Russians involved in this Uh because Dianne Feinstein uh
Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut they all came out with this accusation
about it about it being linked to Russia Um We told them that there's nothing
there and they they went and they did it anyway you know and so there are
lots of stories like that now that are kind of falling apart Right