



FEC Complaint Filed Against Facebook for Federal Election Campaign Violations

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U.S.A. —(AmmoLand.com)- John Crump, a regular journalist for AmmoLand News, and Gun Owners of America have filed a complaint with the Federal Election Commission (FEC) alleging violations of provisions of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 by Facebook, the company.

The complaint alleges Facebook (FB), and/or Agence France-Presse (AFP), and Kamala Harris, the candidate for Vice President on the 2020 Democratic ticket, have violated the Federal Election Campaign Act in the following ways. From the complaint:

1. the prohibition on corporations making in-kind contributions (see 52 U.S.C. §§ 30101(8), 30118);
2. the limitations on making coordinated expenditures (52 U.S.C. § 30116(a)(7));
3. the prohibition on making Independent Expenditures without disclaimers and reporting (52 U.S.C. §§ 30104(g) and 30120(a)); and
4. the prohibition on foreign nationals making in-kind contributions for the purpose of influencing a federal election (52 U.S.C. § 30121).

The hostility of Facebook against gun ownership, the right to arms, conservative speech, as well as Republicans, has become a notoriously subjective experience for many Second Amendment supporters.

The allegations in the FEC complaint are stark and easily followed. Facebook approves of AFP as its official “fact-checker”, which gives the French government supported agency significant power in deciding what is acceptable speech on Facebook for U.S.-based users, particularly as it concerns what is or is not “*Fake News*”.

The “fact-checker” is supposed to be unbiased in what it labels as false or true.

False Information Flagging of Cam Edwards “Kamala Harris Says She Supports Your Second Amendment Rights. Her Record Proves Otherwise” FB Screenshot August 2020.

The complaint lays out how an article written by Cam Edwards titled “Kamala Harris Says She Supports Your Second Amendment Rights, Her Record Proves Otherwise” on the website BearingArms.com, was taken down [technically redirected by overlay] by Facebook.

The FB app would overlay a bold-warning claiming the original article was “*False Information*” and hijacked interested readers, redirecting these FB users to an AFP article, “Kamala Harris does not oppose gun ownership or the Second Amendment”. Facebook searches for the Edwards

article were directed to the AFP puff-piece driving Facebook users to the Fench article filled with less-than-truthful reporting failing to mention her history of supporting gun control and taking away your Second Amendment rights.

AmmoLand News and John Crump reported on this when first discovered on August 21, 2020, in an article on AmmoLand News titled 'Facebook Fact Checker Interfering in U.S. Election, Covering for Harris's Gun Control'.

Another blatant example of the false "*False Information*" flagging was when an article by Texas Director for GOA, Rachel Malone was shadow-blocked. The article is entitled "Kamala Harris is the Gun Owner's Worst Nightmare". Multiple screenshots, where Facebook took down other articles about Candidate Kamala Harris's position on a private right to arms, were easily found all over FB, see the selection below.

In the filed FEC complaint, "John Crump and Gun Owners of America, Inc. Federal Election Commission Complaint Against: Facebook, AFP Fact Check, and Kamala Harris for Vice President", goes on to detail how Facebook then deleted the personal FB account of AmmoLand News contributor John Crump. After John attempted to post on the Facebook App a link to the original Kamila Harris court document or Amicus Brief referenced in the Cam Edwards article. That court-filed document, submitted by Kamila Harris in her own words, was once more falsely flagged with the warning. When John called attention to this practice directly with FaceBook his account was shortly thereafter deleted.

What Agence France-Presse (AFP) Conveniently Fails to Report

The AFP paper does not show official statements from the Harris campaign which deny or reject the positions in the 2008 amicus brief. Instead, AFP interprets the statements as though banning some guns and some gun ownership is not an attack on the right to own guns, but only "gun safety" measures.

The AFP paper takes the same political position as the Harris position, which is, essentially, the Second Amendment is or should be, a paper tiger. They cite the Harris statement in 2018:

At a Judiciary Committee hearing in March 2018, Harris called for "common sense gun safety laws" and said "it's a false choice to suggest that you are either in favor of the Second Amendment or you want to take everyone's guns away."

Thus, AFP comes down on Harris' side of a contentious Constitutional issue, which has legal scholars on both sides. AFP only cited experts who hold that Second Amendment rights are extremely limited. AFP did not cite those who hold Second Amendment rights to be broad, such as Eugene Volokh from UCLA, or David Kopel of the Cato Institute.

This illustrates part of the problem with "fact-checkers" on political questions.

Either side can find "experts" to agree with its own beliefs.

When a public forum takes down assertions from one side, and only allows publication from the opposite side of an issue, that publication has taken sides.

The controversy goes deeper than the opinion of experts on the legal issue. It becomes one of a world-view or a philosophy.

The articles about Harris' statements on more regulation of firearms in the United States cite her positions, and what the writers believe those positions mean for how Kamala Harris will act if she is elected the next Democratic Vice President, one 77-year-old heart-beat-away from being the President of the United States. They are clear and reasonable interpretations.

The AFP paper does not refute the claims of Cam Edwards, Rachel Malone, or John Crump. Instead, they interpret Harris' statements and positions from the same philosophical base as the Harris campaign. Facebook's claims and actions are not transparent or easily followed.

The AFP paper never claims Harris approves of a right to own guns, which is what is required to refute the claims of Edwards and Malone.

Instead, it says Harris does not oppose all gun ownership. The two positions are far apart. AFP never mentions the difference.

Facebook and AFP claim they do not take sides. GOA, John Crump, and the complaint say they do, and are doing so in violation of federal election law.

It is a David v. Goliath effort. Facebook is one of the wealthiest and most powerful companies on earth.

With only a few weeks before election day 2020 and early voting already in effect in some states, Facebook and AFP are exerting their influence on the American presidential election let us hope the FEC will hold them accountable.