

## Fact check

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## Cartoon interpretation

This cartoon interpretation is written in **American English**.

<sup>1</sup> David Granlund's cartoon, published at PoliticalCartoons.com, depicts President Donald Trump sitting in a rowboat with a smug expression. Fluttering around him are several blue birds, two of which hold a sign reading "Twitter Fact Check." Trump is wearing his signature red MAGA hat and swirling around with a shotgun in his boat attempting to shoot the little blue birds flying around his head. The word "BLAM" indicates his rate of fire, and the swirling lines of motion show us that he is turning left and right in his boat to hit as many birds as possible.

<sup>2</sup> The little blue birds flying around Trump are the Twitter logos. Twitter is the social media platform that Trump prefers most for putting his ideas out into the world. It is well-known that Trump often turns to Twitter to praise his allies and attack his rivals. The gun is meaningful in this cartoon for a number of reasons. First of all, it addresses the rapid-fire way in which Trump shoots out his tweets. Secondly, it serves as a metaphor for the biting nature of many of his tweets when he is attacking political rivals, leaders of other nations, or celebrities he doesn't agree with. Lastly and most obviously, it is used to show him attacking Twitter itself. But why would Trump be lashing out at the platform that gives him the freedom to say whatever he wants?

<sup>3</sup> Granlund's cartoon is addressing a recent development in social media and Donald Trump's Twitter activities. In May 2020, after tweeting that mail-in ballots are "substantially fraudulent," Twitter labeled Trump's tweet misleading by placing a link below the tweet reading "get the facts about mail-in ballots." The link takes one to a website that corrects the misinformation. Because of this, Trump signed an executive order removing some of the legal protections given to social media platforms. He also claimed that Twitter has "unchecked power" to censor users. Then a couple days later, Trump tweeted about the Black Lives Matter protests saying, "when the looting starts, the shooting starts." This tweet received a label from Twitter that says: "This Tweet violated the Twitter Rule about glorifying violence." It is this seeming back-and-forth that Granlund addresses in his cartoon of Trump shooting at Twitter but to no avail, as the birds and the labels seem here to stay.

<sup>0-1</sup> **to depict** (di'pɪkt) zeigen – **rowboat** Ruderboot – **smug expression** selbstzufriedener Gesichtsausdruck – **to flutter** flattern – **signature** charakteristisch – **MAGA** = "Make America Great Again" – **to swirl around**; s.w.u. **to swivel around** s. wild hin- und herdrehen – **to indicate s.th.** ('ɪndɪkeɪt) auf etw. hindeuten – **rate of fire** Feuerrate – **motion** Bewegung

<sup>2</sup> **to turn to s.th.** zu etw. greifen – **to praise s.o.** jdn. loben – **ally** ('ælaɪ) h.: Anhänger(in) – **rival** Gegner(in) – **meaningful** bedeutungsvoll – **to address s.th.** etw. thematisieren – **rapid-fire** schnell aufeinanderfolgend – **to serve as s.th.** als etw. dienen – **biting** (fɪg) bissig – **to lash out at s.th.** gegen etw. wettern

<sup>3</sup> **mail-in ballot** Stimmzettel für die Briefwahl – **substantially** (səb'stænʃəli) im Wesentlichen; beträchtlich – **fraudulent** ('frɔ:dʒələnt) betrügerisch – **misleading** irreführend – **executive order** (ɪg'zɛkjətɪv) Präsidentenerlass – **legal protections** Rechtsschutz – **unchecked power** unkontrollierte Macht – **to censor** ('senʃə) zensieren – **to loot** plündern – **to violate s.th.** ('vaɪəleɪt) gegen etw. verstoßen – **to glorify violence** ('glɒrɪfaɪəns) Gewalt verherrlichen – **to no avail** (ə'veɪl) vergeblich



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