

Washington Post and NPR join right-wing witch-hunt against tech journalist Taylor Lorenz

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On Thursday, the *Washington Post* and National Public Radio joined with the far-right media in a witch-hunt against journalist Taylor Lorenz for her opposition to the Biden administration's participation in the Israeli genocide in Gaza.

The latest campaign against Lorenz, a widely read columnist for the *Washington Post* and authority on social media and digital journalism, was launched by right-wing media figures after she attended an event for digital influencers called "Creators Summit" at the White House on Wednesday.

Later that day, Lorenz shared with her friends in a private Instagram chat a photo of herself at the White House event that also showed Biden in the background greeting a group of guests. Beneath the image of the president was a caption that said, "War criminal" followed by a sad face emoticon.

US President Joe Biden is the leading funder and enabler of the Gaza genocide, which has killed between 40,000 and 200,000 men, women and children since October. He is, in fact, a war criminal.

Although Lorenz had not shared the meme publicly with her 143,000 Instagram followers, her private Instagram post was leaked to right-wing journalists, such as Jon Levine of the *New York Post*, who then began denouncing her for calling Biden a war criminal.

Responding to a Twitter/X post by Levine, Lorenz wrote, "You people will fall for any dumass edits someone makes."

At this point, National Public Radio (NPR) published an article declaring, "Senior editors at the *Washington Post* are reviewing a prominent tech columnist's private story on social media, which appears to label President Biden a 'war criminal' in a photo."

The NPR report continued, "Lorenz told her editors that someone else had added the caption to the photo." Suggesting her reference to edits of the photo was a falsification, NPR said they had obtained a "screengrab of Lorenz's actual post, which contained the caption."

To further substantiate their effort to smear Lorenz, NPR stated, "Four people with direct knowledge of the private Instagram story confirmed its authenticity to NPR. They spoke to NPR on condition they not be identified due to the professional sensitivity of the situation for Lorenz."

Picking up on the NPR story, Fox News wrote on Saturday morning, "*Washington Post* columnist Taylor Lorenz is changing her story after initially claiming her 'war criminal' post about President Biden was edited."

All along, however, Lorenz never claimed the image with the caption was not real. She had said the photo was edited by a friend and then she shared it in the private chat.

Taylor Lorenz is a widely read authority on social media and the topic of internet culture, which is associated with the generation of intellectuals, writers and influencers who have grown up within and mastered the world of computer and online communications technologies.

Lorenz has been an outspoken advocate of free speech rights online and long been the subject of online harassment and coordinated targeting by right-wing media personalities, including the former Fox News host Tucker Carlson.

In 2022, her Twitter account was suspended by the platform's new owner at the time Elon Musk after she asked him to comment on a story. Before restoring her account, Musk tweeted that it had been shut down due

to “prior doxxing action from the account,” without further explanation.

Prior to working for the *Washington Post*, Lorenz was a tech writer for the *Daily Beast*, the *Atlantic*, *Business Insider* and the *New York Times*. She is the author of the book, *Extremely Online: The Untold Story of Fame, Influence, and Power on the Internet*, published in 2023 by Simon and Schuster.

The latest campaign against Lorenz, in which all factions of the corporate media have united in attacking her, has been launched out of fear that the oppositional views she represents against the US government are gaining an ever wider audience, especially among young people.

It must be stated that sharing a photo privately or otherwise on social media labeling Biden a war criminal is to tell the obvious truth. Only those publications and individuals affiliated with the Democrats and Republicans, who have endorsed Israel’s ongoing war crimes against Palestinians in Gaza would object to the characterization.

With the support of both parties in Congress, the Biden White House has been funding and arming the Israeli massacre for more than 10 months which has resulted in the deaths of over 186,000 people, according to a study by the authoritative medical journal *The Lancet*. It is for good reason that protesters demonstrating against the crimes carried out against Palestinians have referred to the present occupant of the White House as “Genocide Joe.”

As part of her left-leaning views, Lorenz has also come under attack by the media promoters of the “forever COVID” policy of the corporate elite and US government for her stand on the need for mitigation measures against the ongoing pandemic. In the photo from the White House which has become the occasion for the latest attempt to smear her, Lorenz is wearing an N95 mask.

The WSWS defends Taylor Lorenz and her right to tell the truth to her readers and followers about the unfolding genocide and the role of the Biden administration and the Democratic Party in supporting Israel’s ethnic cleansing of Palestinians from Gaza. We denounce the *Washington Post* and NPR, who have teamed up with right-wing Murdoch media outlets, such as the *New York Post* and Fox News, in attacking Lorenz for her principled stand on these significant

political issues.



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