Twitter Thread by Cosmic Penguin



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So regarding to my "bombshell"...it's perhaps a bit less dramatic than many presumed, yet it still troubles me a lot, to the point that I wondered whether I should stop posting on certain things

> I'm going to make a bomb shell statement here around the turn of the year, something so risky that I face prospects of the Twitter account being attacked or even banned.
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> It's about my very uneasy Twitter experience over the past 2-6 months, the worst I could ever remember.
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> — Cosmic Penguin (@Cosmic_Penguin) December 31, 2020

You see, I realized in the last few months that, by translating information and news related to one of the fastest growing spaceflight powers of the world...I inadvertently became a spreader of PRC propaganda.

And with me exactly 180 degrees away from them, I feel scared.

It actually started a few years ago - it's not hard to meet Chinese Twitter users interested in spaceflight, either those living overseas or find a way to climb over the wall. Not surprisingly, many of these S/F enthusiasts are interested in their own military too.

This steadily grew with my followers' count until the flagship Chinese spaceflight missions of 2020 (Chang'e 5 especially but also many others) brought in dozens of them liking/re-tweeting my info tweets sometimes, and similar no. of such followers every month.

I do casually check these new followers/users sometimes. To my horror, far too many of them routinely insults, attacks, mocks others who they see as "anti-China" or spread potential mis-information, even blatant attacks, that started off w/ their state media/spokesperson.

I always expect some of such people to be very nationalistic. What I DIDN'T expect is that the percentages of them are extremely high lately, up to 90%!

And it's absolutely awful and disgusting in seeing some of the words they use, in many cases in English & replying to others.

For a recent example dozens of them follow my tweets while at the same time happily mocking a certain Down Under nation on their case of soldiers murder of civilians, after *the* PRC foreign spokesperson take a distasteful propaganda satire drawing & mock that country on Twitter.

And that's just one tip of a giant iceberg - never mind how much insults and fake info they have thrown out on my very own city & people of 1 certain island. This cohesive behavior, often below Western media and politician accounts in English, are hardly explain by bots.

These people often post their own lives in Chinese - what to eat, college life, even a dozen or two liking the same anime girls that I like too. Yet they just can't keep the mouths shut when it comes to international affairs & keep attacking using disgusting words.

I simply do 2 things to such accounts - block and report. Unfortunately the no. of these accounts following my Chinese spaceflight news simply grow w/ time. Just for Chang'e 5 alone I've blocked 100+ in the last 2 months, that's just how bad it is.

As someone who's as close to 180 degrees away from their directions (you'll be surprised in many of my stances I would say) I'm disheartened that - whether they followed me because they really like my info translations or they think I'm a threat - my tweets are used in such ways.

I always think that gathering/translating as much info and data on *the* independent spaceflight power of the 21 Century - regardless of how they are twisted or modified or presented - is crucial for independent analysis of the current and future of Chinese developments in S/F.

It's like past time spaceflight enthusiasts gathering news & tracking Soviet space missions for fun, or today's armchair analysts looking at Iran and North Korea. No-one would think that they are transmitting these places' propaganda.

But I overlooked 1 thing about the PRC.

The cases above are for nations where they don't have people roaming around social media platforms/in the streets actively promoting opposite views of the globe.

For China though, their aggressive active spreading of their views of the world means such effects would occur.

I have briefly thought of suspending reporting on Chinese spaceflight to stop my tweets from being used as such. I've decided to go on for the time being, as I really believe "any twisted news/info is better than no news as long as you analyze it".

But I'm not sure "they" will allow me to do so. I could very likely lose my account if I say a few more alphabets/words a bit farther than here, words that are normal for 80+% of world's population but literally lighting up liquid hydrogen for the remaining ones.

Even this thread may attract random attacks like moths to lightbulbs. I've seen far too many similar cases in all corners of the world because of such affairs. It's really awful and w/ the state of the largest economical power of the world by 203X

behind, it's going to get worse.

Hopefully my account would continue to stand after writing what I really feel must be communicated. If something happens soon, please help stand with me.

Have a happy 2021 everyone.