

## **“Shoot Them All” Facebook Used to Incite Violence Against Protesters**

### **Summary**

In the wake of anti-racism protests across the country, right-wing Facebook groups have become hubs for racist and violent rhetoric. Fueled by conspiracy theories, dehumanizing speech, and misinformation, users on right-wing Facebook pages have begun encouraging police, military, and armed citizens to kill protesters. We reviewed comments from a sample of 48 posts on six right-wing public Facebook groups and found just over 200 comments explicitly calling for the deaths of anti-racism protesters. These groups, historically plagued by racist misinformation and an array of right-wing conspiracy theories, have become hubs for violent right-wing extremism.

### **Top lines**

- We identified 48 unique posts that contained hateful or violent comments directed at protesters. These comments come from six different Facebook groups, including *Tea Party*, *Trump for President 2020*, *Deplorables for Trump*, *NRA (Unofficial)*, *Judge Jeanine Pirro Friends*, and *Trump Daily Report*.
- The posts referenced peaceful protests, military use of force against civilians, Trump’s announcement that he would designate the anti-fascist movement “a terrorist organization,” and posts about looting.
- We retrieved 24,870 comments from these Facebook posts and analyzed them for hateful or violent language that could be reasonably seen as inciting violence against protesters.
- We found 207 explicit calls for violence, with phrases such as ...
  - “Shoot to kill”
  - “Run them over”

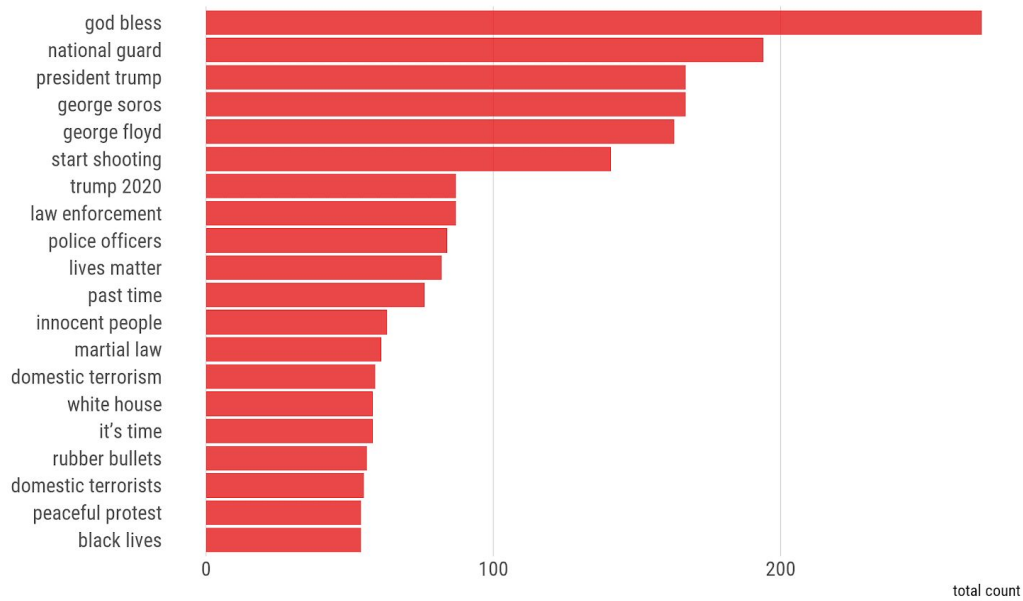
- “Shoot them all”
- “[Bring] body bags”
- “Locked and loaded”
- “Hunt [them] down”
- “Exterminate [them]”
- “Eliminate [them]”
- We also found commentators frequently using dehumanizing speech.<sup>1</sup> Some of the most frequently used words:
  - “Terrorist(s)” (601 comments)
  - “Thug(s)” (491 comments)
  - “Criminal(s)” (416 comments)
  - “Animal(s)” (249 comments)
  - “Dog(s)” (83 comments)
  - “Rat(s)” (80 comments)
  - “Cockroach(es)” or “roach(es)” (34 comments)
- During our research, we also found instances of potentially inauthentic accounts luring users into other pro-Trump groups. These groups appear to be managed by accounts based outside of the U.S. or which appear to be compromised.

### **What were the most frequent word pairs used in the comments?**

In the top 20 word pairs in comments, we found frequent references to violence against protesters or an oft-touted conspiracy that George Soros is funding the protests. Some of the most frequent word pairs associated with violence against protesters include “national guard,” “start shooting,” “past time,” “martial law,” “domestic terrorism,” and “domestic terrorists.”

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<sup>1</sup> Dehumanizing terms were used to describe protesters and other individuals, such as George Soros, or political groups, such as Democrats.



Calls to violence against protesters were fueled by hate speech, false generalizations, and conspiracy theories.

## Hate speech

Many commenters used dehumanizing language to describe protesters, ranging from comparing protesters to animals to generalizing them as criminals. The most common dehumanizing language referred to protesters as “terrorists.” This rhetoric was likely fueled by Trump’s attempt to designate anti-facists as terrorists, but it’s not exclusively linked to Trump’s influence. Some comments described Black Lives Matter as a terrorist organization – and George Soros as a terrorist for supposedly funding protesters. Black Lives Matter and anti-racist protesters under the BLM movement have long been smeared by right-wing media as terrorists. And George Soros terrorist accusations are part of a staple right-wing anti-Semitic conspiracy theory. “Thugs” and “criminals” were also frequently used to describe anti-racism protesters.



**Polly LaMott** I'm with Trump, Antifa group are definitely terrorists, and what do we do with terrorists? Go after them and irradiate!!!

Like · 6d



**Don Moldy** Get the military out and blow these thugs away. They're domestic terrorists. 10-20 laying on the ground dead will disperse the thugs real quick. Small sacrifice for the damage they're causing. These scumbags don't deserve to live.

Like · 1w



**Bing Ludjin** Shoot those thugs 🤔 they are not Americans they are terrorist.

Like · 6d · Edited



When calling for violence, many commenters also referred to targets as animals. The most common reference was the word “animals,” followed by “dogs,” “rats,” and “cockroaches,” or “roaches.”



**Jane Kielty Serreino** So sad. Pure animals need to be put down.

Like · 6d



**Joel Knight** O so he was by his self...yea right...kill the roaches

Like · 1w

False generalizations



Some calls to violence were justified by users under the false premise that anti-racism protesters were killing people and destroying communities. The calls to violence we highlighted here were not self-defense cases.

Commenters argued that lethal force should be used in retribution or as a preventative measure against protesters. Claims that protesters were killing people were often accompanied with other loaded terms like “looting” and “rioting,” terms which are widely parroted across right-wing media.



**Rodd Pederzani** Shoot them! When the others see that they will be met with extreme force, they will run and hide! These rioters are killing people! Time to end this BULLSHIT!

Like · 1w



## Conspiracy theories

Calls to violence were often justified under conditions created by long-running right-wing conspiracy theories. The main premise, building off various conspiracy theories, is that the Democratic establishment is paying people to protest and/or funding protest organizers in order to create some sort of government overhaul. The conspiracy theories that overlap to create this premise include 1) the anti-Semitic theory that George Soros and “globalists” are responsible for funding protesters, 2) staging and crisis actor theories (in this case, that George Floyd’s murder was staged or that filmed attacks against protesters were staged), and 3) theories that Democrats are trying to start some sort of civil war or race war in order to overthrow Trump. Anti-Semitic conspiracy theories related to George Soros were by far the most prevalent in comments. A notable portion of calls to violence were targeted at Soros.



Ken N Karen

The pandemic isn't working.  
Start the racial wars.



Like · 1w



Commenters are calling on the military and law enforcement and rogue citizens alike to kill protesters.

Calls to violence that addressed specific audiences usually either called on the police or military to kill protesters or called on vigilantes to kill. Calls for these two buckets of audiences occurred throughout different types of posts but were clustered in specific posts. Many commenters called on action from the police or military in posts related to protesters outside of the White House and Trump's retreating to a bunker during those protests.

Commenters called on armed citizens to kill protesters largely in posts related to protesters making their way to the “suburbs.”

### **What were the most-liked comments?**

We found that comments targeting Geroge Soros were among the most frequently liked comments for these posts. Comments blamed Soros for the protests, with one comment calling for him to “be hunted down like a dog,” or blamed the Democratic Party and politicians for fueling the protests.

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#### **Likes Comment**

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- 93 TAKE SOROS AND ALL OF HIS ASSOCIATES DOWN!!!!EXPOSE IT ALL AND BE DONE FOR ONCE AND FOR ALL!!!!
  - 84 This is organized crime. This is no protest.
  - 73 Soros needs to be hunted down like a dog!! He is a domestic terrorist & traitor-he needs to be hung for treason!!!
  - 64 This is what happens when our children are indoctrinated with the liberal socialist agenda.  
Guys this is not just Soros. The liberal nuts in Hollywood,rosie, Madonna! Ashley, Alex, all the other nits calling
  - 60 daily for violence. Plus Al Sharpton, Jessie ,Maxine, Nancy, Schiff, Schumer! Nadler, all are guilty.
  - 54 The looting and rioting is brought to you by the Democratic Party paid for by their leader George Soros.
  - 54 Dear God: Please watch over our President, Vice President and their families and staff. Keep them all safe!
  - 49 There shouldn't be rioters within a mile of the Whitehouse
  - 46 You people must have a death wish country people don't play like city police  
This could only be The Mafii Deep State Soros, clinton's, Newson, pelosi, Gates. They Are That  
Desperate.....Prayers for Our President and Vice President's Family From Corruption if The Democrats.....May
  - 42 God Bless and Wstch Over.
- 

### **Which group contained the most calls to violence and dehumanization of protesters or George Soros?**

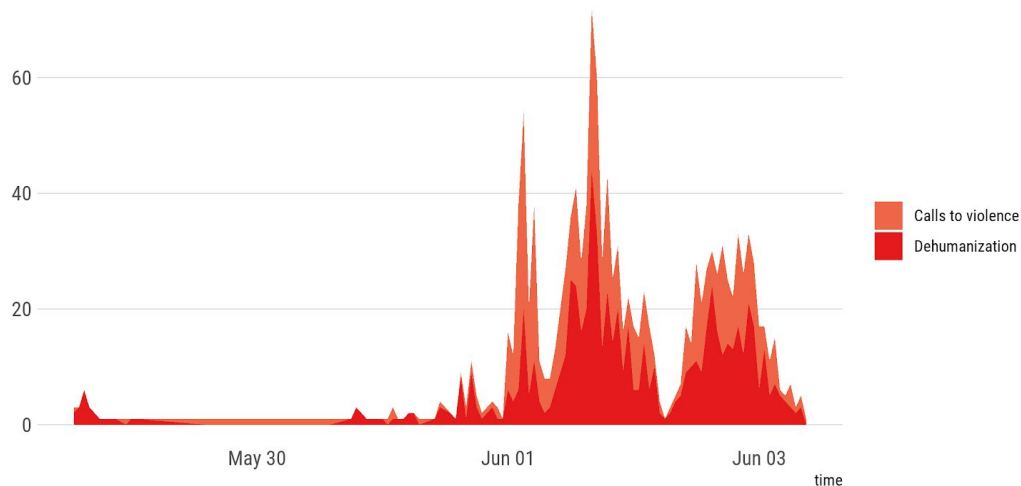
Our analysis shows that the *Judge Jeanine Pirro Friends* group contained the most hateful and violent language, followed by Trump groups, the *Tea Party*, *Trump Daily Report*, and *NRA (Unofficial)*.

## Facebook groups where calls to violence or dehumanization are most common



## Hourly number of comments using explicit calls to violence or dehumanization

People called protesters words like "animals," "dogs," and "roaches" and said they should be shot.



In this chart, we analyzed the hourly number of comments that contained either explicit calls to violence – including phrases like “shoot them all,” “start

killing,” “start shooting,” and “exterminate” them – and dehumanization, which includes using words like “animals” or “roaches” and “cockroaches.” “Animals” was by far the most frequent word commenters used to refer to protesters and looters.

### **Luring people into pro-Trump groups managed by inauthentic accounts**

While analyzing comments on these posts, we found a number of users sharing links to pro-Trump groups with the following messages:

join new group patriots for trump

  <https://www.facebook.com/groups/528901590502597/>

join new group patriots for trump  <https://www.facebook.com/groups/528901590502597/>

join new group president trump supporters

 <https://www.facebook.com/groups/676713323110952/>

These links were shared by accounts that we suspect are engaged in coordinated inauthentic behavior. For example, accounts “[Mariana Tavares](#)” and “[Mariana Silva](#)” posted links to the group “Patriots 4 Trump,” a group which until recently was called “Ação Jovem,” Portuguese for “Young Action.”

**+ Join Group** **... More** Join this group to post and comment.

### About This Group

#### Description

Trump 2020  
Our mission here is simple. We seek to spread real conservative news on this platform. Our reach is large and we can have an impact. Every time a news article is shared or reacted to, it reaches more people.  
More... See More

- Public**  
Anyone can see who's in the group and what they post
- Visible**  
Anyone can find this group
- General**

#### HISTORY

- Group created on June 13, 2013
- Name recently changed from **Ação Jovem**

**See More**

#### GROUP BY

- PATRIOTS TRUMP Mariana For Trump 2020**  
349 like this

**Suggested Groups** **See All**

Both the accounts “Mariana Silva” and “Mariana Tavares” had years of inactivity prior to recent updates to their profile pictures or the posting of memes in support of President Donald Trump and political news in the U.S. The account “Mariana Tavares” last updated its timeline in September 2018. The account self-reports its location as Portage, Ohio, but other account information does not match this location. For example, the account had previously posted only in Portuguese and reports studying in Portugal. The same is true of the account “Mariana Silva,” which reportedly lives in Portugal.

 Mariana Tavares Add Friend Message ...

[Timeline](#) [About](#) [Friends](#) [Photos](#) [More ▾](#)


DO YOU KNOW MARIANA?

To see what she shares with friends, send her a friend request. Add Friend

 **Intro**

Jesus Te Ama ❤️

- 🎓 Studied at CEULP/ULBRA
- 🎓 Went to Colégio supremo
- 🎓 Went to Ainda não
- 🏠 Lives in Portage, Ohio
- 💞 In a relationship

 **Photos**



 **Mariana Tavares** June 6 at 8:05 PM · 🌐



FOXNEWS.COM  
✔️ **AOC supports Defund the Police demands in wake of George Floyd's death**



DO YOU KNOW MARIANA?

To see what she shares with friends, send her a friend request.

[Add Friend](#)

**Intro**

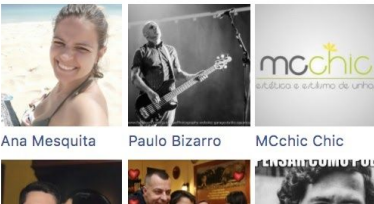
Lives in Sacavém

From Ourém

**Photos**



**Friends · 17**



**Mariana Silva** updated her profile picture.  
May 9 at 12:44 PM ·

...



Update your profile picture with this frame from  
**Graphic Designer Junction**.

[Try it](#)

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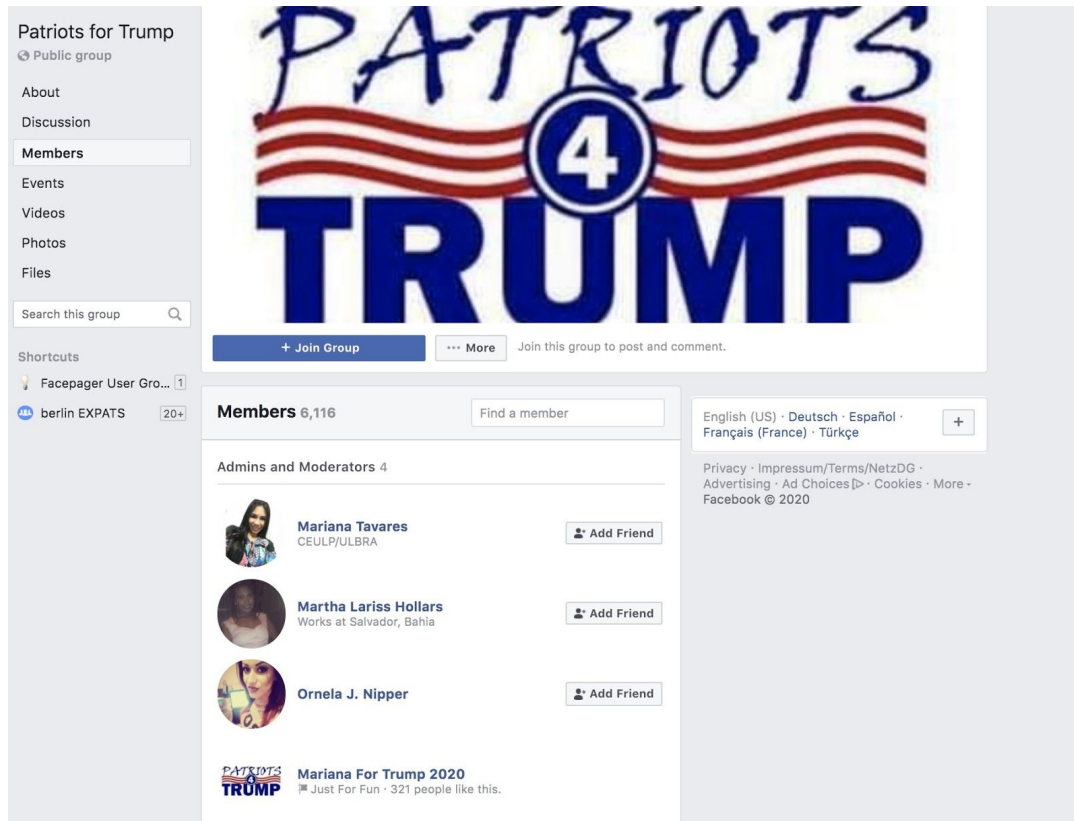
[Share](#)



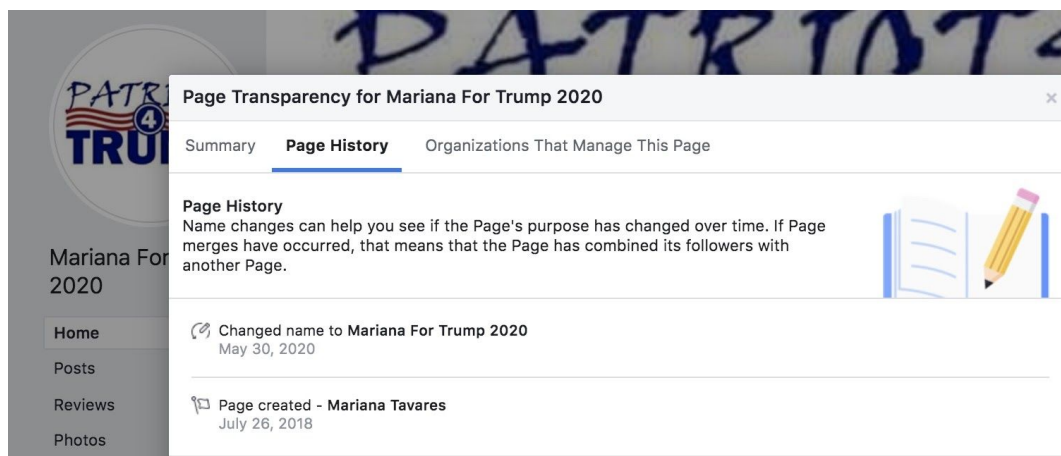
**Mariana Silva** updated her profile picture.  
June 18, 2013 ·

...





The group “Patriots 4 Trump” is managed by “Mariana Tavares” and a page called “[Mariana for Trump 2020](#).” The page “Mariana for Trump 2020” was created on July 26, 2018, and called “Mariana Tavares” until it changed its name to “Mariana for Trump 2020” on May 30, 2020.



The group “Patriots 4 Trump” also contains posts filled with comments calling for violence against protesters. We identified at least four other potentially inauthentic accounts attempting to funnel users to the “Patriots 4 Trump” group. Nearly all of these accounts previously posted in Portuguese, or their profiles contain evidence that suggests they may be from Portugal, though some purport to live in the U.S. We believe that the accounts may have been compromised and are being used to lure unaware users into the “Patriots 4 Trump” group.

### **Potentially inauthentic accounts**

[Martha Lariss Hollars](#)

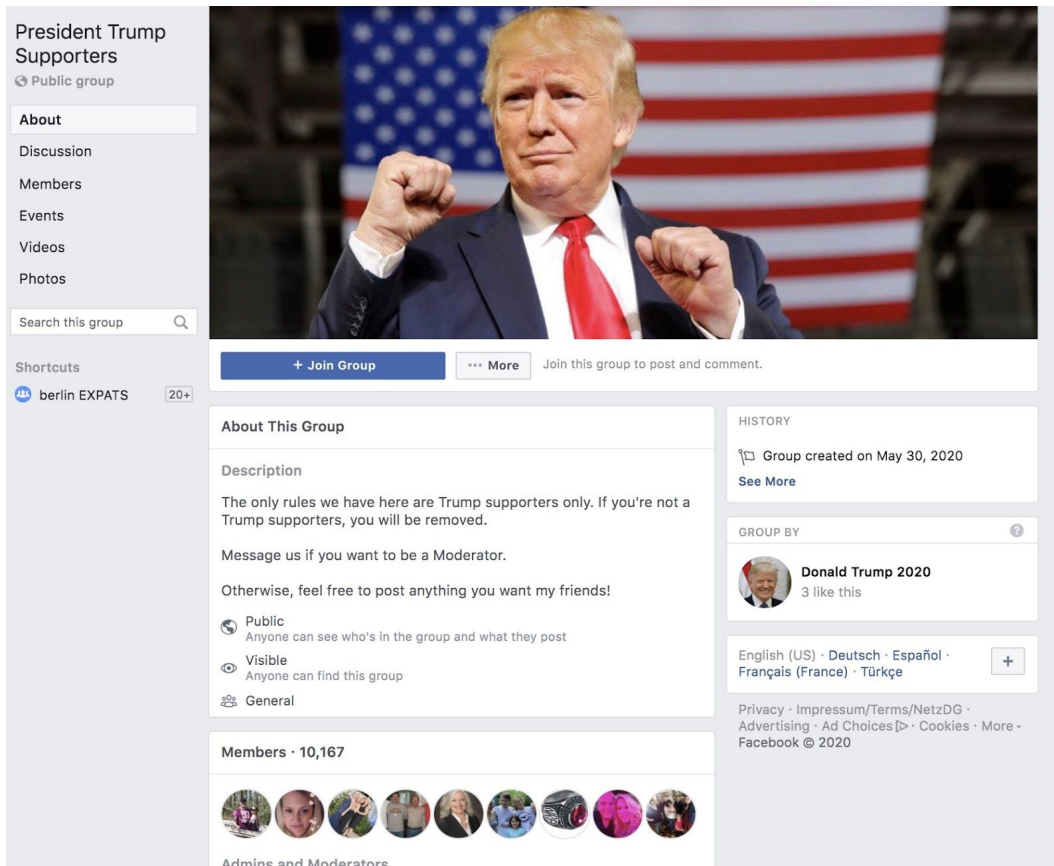
[Arthur Twitchwell](#)

[Sara Martinez](#)

[Lidiane Maria](#)

[Mariana Tavares](#)

[Mariana Silva](#)



In addition, we also identified the accounts sharing links to another group, "[President Trump Supporters](#)," which showed an unusual number of new members in a short period of time. When we found the group, on June 3, 2020, the group already had over 10,000 members, though it had only been created on May 30, 2020. Like the previous group, many of the accounts administering this group also show indicators of inauthenticity.

The group is managed by a page, "[Donald Trump 2020](#)," which also manages another group, "[IVANKA TRUMP SUPPORTERS](#)." The page "Donald Trump 2020" consistently posts links to a site called [washingtondailyupdates\[.\]com](#). That site is associated with the page "[Washington Daily Updates](#)," which is managed from the Philippines.

## Page Transparency for Washington Daily Updates

**Summary** Page History People Who Manage This Page Organizations That Manage This Page

**Page Transparency Summary**  
Facebook is showing information to help you better understand the purpose of a Page. See actions taken by the people who manage and post content. [Learn More](#)



### Organizations That Manage This Page

No Confirmed Page Owner

[See More](#)

### Page History

Page created January 18 - Washington Daily Updates

Page name has not changed

Merged with 0 other Pages.

[See More](#)

### People Who Manage This Page

Primary country/region location of people who manage this Page includes:

**Philippines (2)**

### Ads From This Page

This Page is not currently running ads.

[Go to Ad Library](#)

## List of posts reviewed

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2098968433466112/permalink/3518578274838447/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2098968433466112/permalink/3519309701431971/>

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