

## QuickPoint! - We don't need a Ministry of Truth

By John A. Charles, Jr.

Last August, Oregon Secretary of State LaVonne Griffin-Valade issued a Request for Proposal for services to identify and mitigate “harmful information online as it relates to elections” (to see the full RFP document, click [HERE](#)). The Secretary is concerned with what she refers to as “misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation”, or MDM.

According to the RFP, the selected vendor shall review social and online media for alleged instances of MDM on a 24/7 basis, and share relevant information with local stakeholders including the FBI and State Police.

Assuming bids were received, the Secretary of State was scheduled to sign a service contract on October 27<sup>th</sup>.

While election integrity is a noble goal, it's troubling that the Secretary is placing herself as the arbiter of truth regarding supposed problems of misinformation. Over the past decade, Oregon public officials have repeatedly shown themselves to be untrustworthy. Specific cases include the early resignations of Secretary of State Shemia Fagan and Gov. John Kitzhaber; the disastrous mismanagement of the Oregon Public Employee Retirement system; and Gov. Kate Brown's indefensible shutdown of public schools during the pandemic.

Moreover, it's inevitable that monitoring social media related to elections will be broadened to include other kinds of speech that the government disapproves of.

This is an ill-advised move by the SOS, and should be terminated before it ever gets started.

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November 1, 2023

Word Count: 222

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