

Exhibit 49

[News > World > Americas](#)

Jim Acosta: White House shares apparently doctored video posted by conspiracy site InfoWars to justify suspending CNN reporter's press pass

'We will not tolerate the inappropriate behaviour clearly documented in this video,' Sarah Huckabee Sanders says

Tom Embury-Dennis | @tomemburyd | 3 days ago | 196 comments

Like

Click to follow
The Independent US

The White House has shared footage posted by an editor of a conspiracy theory website showing **Jim Acosta** making contact with a Trump aide, in a bid to justify its **suspension of the CNN reporter's** press pass.

Mr Acosta "placed his hands on" a female aide trying to retrieve a microphone as the journalist repeatedly questioned the president, press secretary **Sarah Huckabee Sanders** claimed in a statement

posted to Twitter.

The incident occurred during a fiery press conference in which reporters and Mr Trump clashed over his **divisive rhetoric** in the run-up to the midterms.

Footage showed Mr Acosta attempting to keep the microphone during his questioning of Mr Trump, while the female aide tried three times to grab the microphone from him.

Watch more



White House suspends CNN reporter's press pass after Trump row

On her final attempt, Mr Acosta's free hand briefly blocks the aide's arm, as Mr Trump refuses to answer the reporter's questions.

Announcing Mr Acosta's suspension, Ms Sanders said the White House would "never tolerate a reporter placing his hands on a young woman just trying to do her job".

"As a result of today's incident, the White House is suspending the hard pass of the reporter involved until further notice," she wrote on **Twitter**.

She added: "The question is: did the reporter make contact or not? The video is clear, he did. We stand by our statement."

Late on Wednesday, Ms Sanders posted partial video footage of the incident, alongside a statement which read: "We stand by our decision to revoke this individual's hard pass. We will not tolerate the inappropriate behaviour clearly documented in this video."



The video, which has no audio and is of notably low quality, shows the moment Mr Acosta's hand blocks the aide's attempts to grab the microphone. It repeats the moment six times, each time zooming further into the brief moment of contact.

Many social media users accused Ms Sanders of posting footage which sped up the contact to make Mr Acosta's movement appear more aggressive.



Should Britain allow fracking?

Yes – It makes economic sense to capitalise on the resources available to us and reduce dependence on foreign fuel imports

No – The environmental consequences are too great and the long-term effects uncertain

5

But according to analysis by *The Independent*, the video instead appears to have been doctored to freeze for three frames the moment before Mr Acosta's hand pushes down on the aide's arm.

Ms Sanders' tweet came exactly two hours after the same video was shared by Paul Joseph Watson, editor-at-large of **InfoWars**, a far-right conspiracy theory website fronted by Trump-supporter Alex Jones.

Mr Watson denied altering the footage in an interview with **Buzzfeed News**. He downloaded a gif file posted elsewhere, "zoomed in, saved it again as an mt2 file – then converted it to an mp4 [video file]", he told the site. He added: "Digitally it's gonna look a tiny bit different after processing and zooming in, but I did not in any way deliberately 'speed up' or 'distort' the video."

• **Trump attacks CNN's Jim Acosta in angry White House press conference** [Show all 10](#)





Mr Trump has long feuded with CNN and accused it of peddling “fake news” – the channel is one of his favoured punching bags. During the ill-tempered press conference on Wednesday, he singled out Mr Acosta as “rude”.

He has also threatened to revoke the broadcast licences of outlets whose content he dislikes, and stoked anger against journalists by denouncing them as the “enemy of the people”.

Speaking on CNN to colleague Anderson Cooper, Mr Acosta said: “I was just trying to ask a question of the president. It was obviously a question they didn’t like.

Support free-thinking journalism and subscribe to Independent Minds

“I do think this is a test for all of us. I do think they’re trying to shut us down.”

In a statement, CNN said the revocation of Mr Acosta’s credentials “was done in retaliation for his challenging questions at today’s press conference”.

The company said Ms Huckabee Sanders had “provided fraudulent accusations and cited an incident that never happened”. It added: “This unprecedented decision is a threat to our democracy and the country deserves better. Jim Acosta has our full support.”

MORE ABOUT [JIM ACOSTA](#) [CNN](#) [DONALD TRUMP](#) [SARAH HUCAKBEE SANDERS](#) [WHITE HOUSE](#)

 [Reuse content](#)

Comments

Share your thoughts and debate the big issues

[Learn more](#)

Join the discussion

Newest first

Oldest first

Most liked

Least liked

Loading comments...