

xAI's Grok suddenly can't stop bringing up "white genocide" in South Africa

Where could Grok have gotten these ideas?

The treatment of white farmers in South Africa has been a hobbyhorse of South African X owner Elon Musk for quite a while. In 2023, he responded to a video purportedly showing crowds chanting "kill the Boer, kill the White Farmer" with a post alleging South African President Cyril Ramaphosa of remaining silent while people "openly [push] for genocide of white people in South Africa." Musk was posting other responses focusing on the issue as recently as Wednesday.

They are openly pushing for genocide of white people in South Africa. @CyrilRamaphosa, why do you say nothing?

– gorklon rust (@elonmusk) July 31, 2023

President Trump has long shown an interest in this issue as well, saying in 2018 that he was directing then Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to "closely study the South Africa land and farm seizures and expropriations and the large scale killing of farmers." More recently, Trump granted "refugee" status to dozens of white Afrikaners, even as his administration ends protections for refugees from other countries

Former American Ambassador to South Africa and Democratic politician Patrick Gaspard posted in 2018 that the idea of

large-scale killings of white South African farmers is a “disproven racial myth.”

In launching the Grok 3 model in February, Musk said it was a “maximally truth-seeking AI, even if that truth is sometimes at odds with what is politically correct.” X’s “About Grok” page says that the model is undergoing constant improvement to “ensure Grok remains politically unbiased and provides balanced answers.”

But the recent turn toward unprompted discussions of alleged South African “genocide” has many questioning what kind of explicit adjustments Grok’s political opinions may be getting from human tinkering behind the curtain. “The algorithms for Musk products have been politically tampered with nearly beyond recognition,” journalist Seth Abramson wrote in one representative skeptical post. “They tweaked a dial on the sentence imitator machine and now everything is about white South Africans,” a user with the handle Guybrush Threepwood glibly theorized.

Representatives from xAI were not immediately available to respond to a request for comment from Ars Technica.

<https://arstechnica.com/ai/2025/05/xais-grok-suddenly-cant-stop-bringing-up-white-genocide-in-south-africa/>