



## **Battle Growing Against Silicon Valley To Expose Extreme Leftist Bias**

In a desperate maneuver to deflect attacks, Silicon Valley is attempting to blame such attacks on the so-called 'Alt-Right', which they say is fueled by racists, neo-Nazis and Fascists, and lump all other critics in with these groups. This could not be further from the truth as rank-and-file conservatives from all walks of life are the real protestors against Silicon Valley over-reach. □ TN Editor

Far-right conservatives are escalating their campaign against Silicon Valley with a new series of volleys against the social media gatekeepers that control the flow of information in the digital age.

Last week, former Google engineer James Damore, who was embraced by conservatives after he was fired last year for distributing a memo that questioned whether women were biologically suited to technical roles, filed a lawsuit claiming the Internet giant discriminates against white men and conservatives. That same day, right-wing journalist-turned-entrepreneur Charles C. "Chuck" Johnson sued Twitter, alleging the company violated his right to free speech when it permanently

suspended his account in 2015.

Then Project Veritas, a conservative advocacy organization that purports to expose media bias, released undercover videos of current and former Twitter employees condemning President Trump and discussing tactics the company uses to make it tougher to find the tweets of controversial users.

Johnson, whose lawsuit against Twitter is being underwritten by bitcoin investments and a crowdfunding campaign, says he and others are committed to putting the spotlight on the alleged censoring of conservative views by Silicon Valley companies. Twitter declined to comment on the lawsuit.

“I see myself as fighting for the civil rights of people on the Internet,” said Johnson, a polarizing figure who was banned from Twitter in 2015 after he asked for donations to “take out” civil rights activist DeRay McKesson and whose crowdfunding service WeSearchr has raised money for neo-Nazis. Johnson said the McKesson tweet was not intended as a threat.

“My basic view is that people have a right to use these platforms and they have right to use them in ways that are perfectly legal, if controversial, and the platforms need to respect those rights,” he said.

Johnson’s lawsuit is considered a legal long shot. And so far he has raised less than \$7,000 of his \$100,000 goal on FreeStartr, another crowdfunding service he runs.

But Johnson may already be accomplishing his main goal: Raising questions about the level of power that Silicon Valley companies now have in deciding what gets said in the most populated parts of the Internet.

After a deadly white supremacist rally in Charlottesville underscored the crucial role mainstream online platforms play as organizational tools for hate groups, tech companies began cracking down on users who peddle hate speech and fuel online vitriol — a significant blow to the “alt-right,” which depends on these platforms to spread their message,

recruit and rally supporters and organize events.

PayPal, which prohibits donations to promote hate, violence and intolerance, singled out organizations that advocate racist views, such as the KKK, white supremacist groups or Nazi groups. GoDaddy booted neo-Nazi website The Daily Stormer from its web hosting service.

White nationalists and supremacists began to lose their verified status as Twitter changed who's entitled to the blue checkmark in November. A month later, Twitter began to purge a number of accounts including the American Nazi Party. After Charlottesville, Facebook took down pages belonging to white supremacist groups including White Nationalists United, Right Wing Death Squad and Vanguard America.

An effort by the alt-right to create an alternative ecosystem of Internet companies has met with limited success, says George Hawley, a University of Alabama professor and author of *Making Sense of the Alt-Right*.

"Tech companies that deny the alt-right access to their services can cause the movement serious harm," Hawley said.

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## **The Hill: It's Time To Take Our Privacy Back From Tech Companies**

Game on. More and more people are realizing that 'Big Tech' is totally committed to destroying privacy for every citizen, and that something must be done to stop them before it's too late. They are not going to give up easily, however, because Technocrats hate politicians. □ TN Editor

Your personal information is being collected, organized, purchased and sold on a global market. Polls consistently show that most people are concerned they have lost control of their own personal data. No one is immune from the pervasive information grab by governments, companies, and hackers. This is happening to pretty much anyone alive (or dead) who has ever used the internet, a credit card, gone to school, subscribed to cable television or used a cell phone. There is no escaping this new reality.

However, we can change the rules that govern the way your information is collected and used.

Absolute control of your information is no longer possible, but you can and should have a say in the matter. Think of your data or information as personal property. Companies and governments can use eminent domain or other seizure processes to take that property, but the sting eases when you realize they must afford due process and justly compensate the owner for the property taken.

The biggest difference between your digital property and other personalty is that your every action online creates new digital items of value. Especially your online actions that involve monetary transactions, such as what kind of movies you watch, food you eat or places you visit. This data goes into a profile that increases the value of your information to a marketing company.

Today, internet service providers, social media and search engines develop and sell your profile. Sometimes these marketing companies develop or buy popular apps so they can directly collect information. Your digital property is making money for everyone involved in the process — except you.

My question is, if we are creating something of value, shouldn't we get compensated for it? We shouldn't view all data mining as negative. Make no mistake, some of it can get creepy, but most of it is designed to put products I like in my wallet's sight line. The part that's disconcerting is that it's usually done without my knowledge or consent. This is especially troubling when it comes to my children's information, as kids are now more in touch with electronics than any generation before them. One university study revealed that by age two, 90 percent of kids have a moderate ability to use digital devices.

What's even worse is when this invasion of privacy is used as a way to extort money. It wasn't that long ago AT&T actually charged customers \$30 a month to not be spied on. It was also just this past summer that AT&T talked about rolling out regular internet service that would come with ads based on their data mining. They would allow customers

to opt out of their information grabbing ad-crammed service, but for an additional cost of \$500 to \$800 annually. AT&T has done something important here: admit how much your digital property is worth.

There are, however, a few places that have seen the light. Switzerland, for instance, with their long established respect for personal privacy. Under Article 13 of the country's constitutional right to privacy, authorities are not allowed access to anyone's personal data without their notification and a thorough and transparent data request process. Another example is Australia, where new legislation would allow consumers to own their data. This policy would force government agencies and companies to get explicit permission from users before transferring or selling their data to third parties. Compare that to the United States' current consideration of Section 702, and the unforgivable lack of media coverage over how much of your information law enforcement is allowed to collect and sift through without notice, or even much cause to then use it for whatever purpose they want.

Our actions create new digital property with every click of the mouse, and the result has monetary value. Companies like AT&T shouldn't be allowed to loot our information, then profit from it. We pay them for a service, nothing more. If they want my data, they should have to compensate me. Facebook allows me to use their platform to connect with others for this privilege, and I consider it fair enough to stay on the platform. It's my right to leave that platform, and remove their rights to my digital property when I do.

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# Western Companies Bow To China Bullying To Censor Mentions Of Taiwan, Tibet As Separate Countries

China's repressive Technocracy is now reaching outside of its own borders to bully any corporation or travel site that refers to Taiwan, Tibet or Hong Kong as sovereign countries. Western companies are bowing down to China in full compliance. China would not get away with this except that they exert tremendous trade pressure throughout the whole planet, so non-compliance would be met with financial loss. □ TN Editor

Marriott International was one of several companies caught up in China's crackdown on foreign corporations that allegedly insult its territorial integrity by treating controversial or semi-autonomous regions like Tibet, Hong Kong, Macao, and especially Taiwan as separate "countries" on their websites.

Days after the story broke, Marriott is still offering fulsome apologies and implementing a draconian "eight-point rectification plan" to get right with Beijing.

In fact, according to an article in the state-run China Daily on Thursday, Marriott froze all of its social media worldwide to placate the authoritarian communist nation. The article stated:

*The company was discovered to have classified the four regions as countries in a mail survey to its Chinese members on Jan 9, and “liked” the post of a separatist group on Twitter, which “congratulated” the listing the following day.*

*The actions resulted in strong reactions from both the public and government of China. At a regular news briefing three days later, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs urged overseas companies to show respect for China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity.*

*After identifying its errors, the company has taken the survey offline, “unliked” the post, shut down its six websites and apps in Chinese, and put a freeze on its social media across the world. The CEO has volunteered to issue an apology.*

*It has also terminated the contract with the third-party vendor that built the survey, a Canadian company that Marriott has been working with for a long time, and with the US-based employee who “liked” the tweet.*

The tweet *China Daily* refers to was posted by Friends of Tibet, which China considers a “separatist group” because it advocates independence for the Tibetan people. Media organizations appear strangely reluctant to actually quote the tweet that just got somebody in Marriott’s customer rewards department fired, but Friends of Tibet helpfully pinned it to the top of their Twitter page.

Twitter is one of several social media services banned in China, so Beijing was able to get a foreign (possibly American) employee fired for “liking” a post on an American social media platform that Chinese citizens cannot use.

“This is a huge mistake, probably one of the biggest in my career. To regain confidence and trust, the first thing is to admit the mistake, then fix it, and it would come back slowly as we prove we really mean what



we say,” Marriott’s Asia-Pacific managing director Craig S. Smith told *China Daily* on Wednesday.

To that end, Marriott announced an “eight-point rectification plan” that will include “expanding employee education globally, creating straightforward complaint channels for Chinese customers, and more strictly supervising the work of third-party agents for projects largely targeting the China market.”

China’s frenzied crackdown on challenges to its territorial claims, deliberate or inadvertent, has not been limited to travel company websites. The *Taipei Times* reported on Tuesday that China has taken to destroying entire shipments of Taiwanese food products, if they are not clearly labeled as coming from the “Taiwan Area” or “Taiwan, China,” at a cost of over a hundred thousand dollars U.S. for each lost shipment.

Canada’s *National Post* reported Wednesday about a Peking University alumnus named Shawn Zang, who currently lives in Canada on a student visa, whose parents back in China were visited by the police within hours of Zhang reposting that Friends of Tibet tweet about Marriott.

“It’s like they are holding my parents hostage there, so that I can’t say things. It is not just Chinese, but many non-Chinese are under this censorship. People in Canada and the United States have to censor their own statements if they want to get business inside China, so they don’t say anything. They surrender to censorship,” Zhang keenly observed.

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