

a “mistake,” blaming it on a single engineer working on an “experimental” project, whose code had inadvertently made it into Street View’s software.

The FCC found evidence that contradicted Google’s scapegoating narrative. The records showed that the engineer had e-mailed links to his software documentation to project leaders, who then shared them with the entire Street View team. It also found evidence that on at least two occasions, the engineer had told his colleagues that Street View was collecting personal data.

Street View has since been banned in Germany,

Austria, the Czech Republic, Greece, Lithuania, and India. The author reports, however, that by the summer of 2017, Street View data had mysteriously reappeared for “at least some regions of each of these countries.”

Space does not permit us to recount how, since about 2014, Microsoft, Verizon, Comcast, and others have joined the stampede toward collecting personal data. Surveillance software can now be programmed to bypass or override all signals of a user’s intentions. There are now cookies which recreate themselves whenever they are deleted, and “indoor positioning systems” that track individual movements in airports, shopping malls, and retail stores. For ordinary people, concludes one researcher, “there is simply no defense.” ■

Zuckerberg Calls for More Regulations and ‘Thought Control’

While Investors Are Warned: He ‘May Be the Greatest Con Man in History’

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At the end of March, Facebook, Inc. CEO Mark Zuckerberg called for global regulators to take a “more active role” in governing the Internet, saying that governments need to set clearer rules on “harmful content, election integrity, privacy and data portability.” Zuckerberg said such intervention is “vital to protect both the welfare of users and the fundamental values of an open Internet,” as reported in the *Wall Street Journal* (April 1, p. B1). In other words, big government should be given even more power over the information and opinion available to individuals through tech giants that cooperate with those very governments.

As readers may be aware, public officials in a number of countries are calling for the breakup of Facebook and similar mass technology companies. The editors of the *Wall Street Journal* [“Zuckerberg for Regulation,” April 1, 2019, p. A 16] recently suggested that his “plea for big government to regulate big business will go down well in liberal precincts, where the tech giants have lost the political immunity they had during the Obama years.... Mr. Zuckerberg may think he is buying some protection” from calls to apply antitrust standards to his operations.

Zuckerberg further pledged to do more to “suppress hate speech and other forms of harmful content on its platform.” On March 27, 2019 Facebook executives disclosed that they had spent over three months discussing how to police the Internet with un-named (leftist) academics and “civil-rights” groups (such as the discredited Southern Poverty Law Center). Facebook pledged to begin banning even more content that these highly partisan censors charge contributes to “hate speech and misinformation.” In early April, Facebook started redirecting people who search for terms their censors associate with “white supremacy” and “white nationalism” to an outfit called “Life After Hate.”

On April 3, 2019, Bloomberg.com financial news reported that the personal records, including financial data, of millions of Facebook users were “hiding in plain sight” and posted publicly on Amazon.com Inc.’s cloud computing servers. One Mexico City-based digital platform, Cultura Colectiva, openly stored the records of 540 million Facebook users, including identification numbers and account names. The records were accessible and downloadable for anyone who could find them online. There was little to stop foreign intelligence services, political spying operations, telemarketers, grifters, salesmen, sexual predators, and psychopaths from accessing this information.

Aaron Greenspan, in a PlainSite Reality Check report on Facebook, Inc., reviewed the history of Facebook since Mark Zuckerberg claims he created it in his Harvard dorm room in 2004. Greenspan warned readers that “Facebook’s deception goes back so far and is so pervasive that cataloging its full scope is nearly impossible.... The truth is that at this point, Mark Zuckerberg may in fact be the greatest con man in history, having pulled off a complex fraud at one point valued at approximately ten times the scale of convicted financier Bernard Madoff’s historic and epic Ponzi scheme.” ■

[See www.plainsite.org/realitycheck/Facebook,Inc. PlainSite is a legal research initiative.]