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TikTok is China's tool to win in the Ideological Domain

U.S. lawmakers are currently applying pressure to Google and Apple to be more transparent with users about the applications in their app stores. The transparency would warn users about foreign developed, operated, or owned applications that could pose privacy risks to Americans. Congressional testimony from Intelligence and FBI officials have outlined security risks posed by foreign-owned apps (backdoors and "sharing" user information with the government in which it resides). Use of such apps could have negative effects on U.S. National Security.

In March 2020, researchers uncovered a troubling privacy grab by more than four dozen iOS apps. One of the largest violators of misusing and/or sharing personal data is TikTok, a popular social media and video-sharing app owned by Beijing-based ByteDance. The Chinese-owned phenomenon has taken the Internet by storm, primarily among Generation Z users. Despite TikTok vowing to curb the practice, it continues to access some of Apple users' most sensitive data, which can include passwords, cryptocurrency wallet addresses, account-reset links, and personal messages. Another 32 apps identified in March have not stopped this practice either.

The United States Government (including DoD), India, and many companies have banned employees from having TikTok on their devices. The United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo stated the possibility of the U.S. Government banning TikTok altogether due to the app's connection to China.

TikTok knowingly censors' videos and has demonstrated the capability to assist China in maintaining its "Great Firewall." China believes in the power of information and ideas, if the ideas are China's ideas. This censorship and influence also occur in the United States, directly affecting future generations. Chairman Xi Jinping and others have stated that the Chinese Communist Party believes it is in an ideological war with liberalism generally, and the United States specifically. The United States needs to take China seriously and literally: The Communist Party is not only ideologically opposed to democracy and capitalism; it seeks to destroy it.

What is increasingly clear is that China's insistence that the West stay out of its "internal affairs" is a sentiment that is not reciprocated. The list of Western companies [bullied by China](#) is long and growing.

TikTok is not only a brilliant app that figured out video is more memorable than print or photograph. China is patiently playing the long game by providing the United States with goods and services that the U.S. populace want (or what they perceive the U.S. wants), which gets China closer to winning the ideological war.

Sources and Related Articles

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