



Inside Track

Facebook Develops Censorship Tools to Gain Chinese Market

To say that Facebook has a spotty record where privacy and censorship are concerned would be an understatement. Now, for the sake of gaining official access to China, Mark Zuckerberg's company has developed tools to allow the Communist Chinese government unrestrained censorship of Facebook posts.

According to three current and former Facebook employees, Facebook "has quietly developed software to suppress posts from appearing in people's news feeds in specific geographic areas," the *New York Times* reported on November 22. Those former and current employees spoke on the condition of anonymity, since the software and its development are confidential. The software — created specifically to help Facebook get into the Chinese social media market — would take Internet censorship to a whole new level. In the past, Facebook has complied with government requests in nations such as Pakistan, Russia, and Turkey, removing posts after receiving government requests to do so. As odious as that may be, this new software would allow the oppressive communist regime in Beijing to skip the requests altogether. Rather than Facebook removing posts *after the fact*, Beijing will be able to keep them from showing up *in the first place*.

And while the current and former Facebook employees are careful to say that the software has not yet been — and may never be — deployed, this does illustrate the company's willingness to violate a major plank of its own mission statement to "make the world more open and connected."

Facebook appears poised to do whatever it takes to gain the Chinese market, even if it means handing the keys of censoring and monitoring Facebook posts to the Communist Party in China. Part of the push for tighter controls over the Internet comes from the increase in activism among the Chinese populace, particularly younger, more tech-savvy citizens. While officials claim the measures are being put in place to protect national security, most of the deliberately ambiguous new law is aimed at curtailing dissent.

McDonald's Reacts to \$15 Minimum Wage: Automation in Every Store

It's official: McDonald's says that every one of its 14,000 stores nationwide will be replacing cashiers with automated touch-screen kiosks. As CNNMoney noted November 17:

So the fast food giant is rolling out self-order kiosks, mobile pay options, an updated interior design, even table service. The changes are already starting to show up at locations in Florida, New York and Southern California, where 500 restaurants have been updated. Restaurants in San Francisco, Boston, Chicago, D.C. and Seattle will get upgrades in early 2017. Now, McDonald's loyalists will be able to place their customized order on a touch screen, take a seat and have their meal brought right over. Next year, they'll even have the option of mobile ordering.

This means that, eventually, more than 20 million customers every day will place their own orders at a kiosk or on a mobile device and then have them delivered by a human to their table. And it's just a matter of time before those humans will be replaced by machines as well.

In May, former McDonald's CEO Ed Rensi was asked about the discussion over raising the minimum



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wage. He responded: “I guarantee you if a \$15 minimum wage goes across the country you’re going to see a job loss like you can’t believe. It’s cheaper to buy a \$35,000 robot than it is to hire an employee who’s inefficient making \$15 an hour bagging French fries.”

Here’s the math: A worker being paid \$15 an hour costs his employer \$38,500 a year, including unemployment insurance and the employer’s part of Social Security. If Rensi is right, and the average robot in a McDonald’s costs \$35,000, in less than a year that store has paid for it in reduced wages, and eliminates that \$15 an hour cost forever after. If there are 30 employees in a McDonald’s, and if just 10 of them are replaced by a robot, customers will enjoy another benefit: lower prices on their Happy Meals.

Amid Anti-globalist Outcry, New Push to Grant UN Tax Powers

UN bureaucrats and establishment voices are calling for an international war on national governments that do not adopt pro-tax and anti-privacy policies demanded by globalists. A UN “expert” even claimed that tax competition among different jurisdictions — a key check on government abuses — was something that needed to be stopped by a newly empowered UN.

The latest demands come after years of globalist scheming to impose UN taxes directly on humanity, too. That would allow the dictators club to raise money independently, bypassing national governments. But as the public mood sours on globalism — as evidenced by Donald Trump’s victory, Brexit, and survey results from across European polls showing anti-globalist fervor rising — the globalist agenda may face some serious setbacks in the years ahead.

The most recent globalist demand for greater UN powers over taxation came on October 20 from UN “human rights expert” Alfred de Zayas, a Cuban-born “international lawyer,” who demanded “an international Tax Body to fight tax evasion and corruption, phase-out tax havens, stop competition among tax jurisdictions and abolish secrecy.” Translated into plain English, Zayas called for a new globalist UN bureaucracy with draconian law-enforcement powers, a full-blown assault on self-government and democratic principles, a UN effort to harmonize and rig taxation policy worldwide in favor of oppressive Big Government, and a total end to privacy. The policies would undoubtedly produce a collapse in prosperity, in addition to crushing liberty and self-government.

Rather than fight back against every new totalitarian scheme dreamed up by the UN and the globalist establishment behind it, Americans should push for a complete U.S. government withdrawal from the UN — an Amexit. The American Sovereignty Restoration Act would do exactly that. With Trump declaring on the campaign trail that the UN was not a friend to the United States or to freedom, and with the UN making more ludicrous and autocratic demands by the day, the time has never been better for Americans to demand a permanent end to U.S. participation.

Venezuelan Currency Lost Half Its Value in November

Bloomberg reported November 24 that Venezuela’s currency — the bolívar fuerte or “strong bolívar” — had lost 45 percent of its purchasing power so far that month. The underlying cause was put simply by Professor Milton Friedman, a member of the “Chicago School” of economic free market thinking and winner in 1976 of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences: “Inflation is always and everywhere a monetary phenomenon ... and can be produced only by a more rapid increase in the quantity of money than in output.”



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Venezuela's president, Nicolás Maduro, has inflated the country's currency to pay for its welfare state. In the last 12 months, Venezuela's money supply has increased by 127 percent.

Maduro has shut down the government's reporting on the matter, and so thanks to the Internet and the ingenious efforts of a Home Depot employee in central Alabama, Bloomberg has a better idea of the destruction of the currency than do most Venezuelans. Gustavo Diaz, who works at Home Depot, heads up, in his spare time, an Internet site called DolarToday, which uses a scanning program to add up the requests by its 800,000 unique daily visitors to exchange the bolívar for other currencies or for goods such as soap, prescription drugs, and the like.

Officially the exchange rate in Venezuela is 10 bolívares to the dollar. But with hyperinflation taking over, the rate is likely to accelerate, reaching 3,500 to 4,000 bolívares to the dollar shortly, according to Asdrubal Oliveros, director of Edoanalitica, an economic forecaster in Caracas.

The end is called a "crackup boom": Citizens become suddenly aware of the fact that inflation is a deliberate policy and will go on endlessly. A breakdown occurs. The crack-up boom appears. People are anxious to swap their money against real goods, no matter whether they need the goods or not. Within a very short time, perhaps a few weeks or even days, the currency used as money is no longer used as media of exchange. It becomes scrap paper.

Fidel Castro: Death of a Murderous, Communist Dictator

Fidel Castro died November 25 at the age of 90, but the communist tyranny he imposed on the Cuban people lives on. Unfortunately, much of the American media is trying to bury the truth about his murderous regime — and those in America who helped Castro come to power — with him.

In its coverage of Castro's passing, the increasingly discredited mainstream media is downplaying or ignoring Castro's crimes against humanity — and generally refers to him as the "former Cuban leader," as opposed to a dictator, which he was. He was also a mass murderer, and his brutal oppression of the Cuban people caused many of his fellow citizens to risk their lives to flee their island homeland on rafts and whatever else might float.

News of the death of the tyrant touched off celebrations in Miami's Little Havana in South Florida.

Despite the glossing over of inconvenient facts about the Castro brothers — Fidel and his younger brother, Raúl, who currently holds power — by most of the American media, the Cuban community of exiles in Miami knows the truth. That is why they or their ancestors fled their Cuban homeland at some point since the Castros' seizure of power in 1959.

Fidel Alejandro Castro Ruz was born August 13, 1926, the son of a Spanish immigrant who was a sugar plantation owner. Contrary to the belief that communism is a product of the "exploited" working class, Castro was not drawn to the ideology of Marx and Lenin by toiling in the cane fields. He was introduced to the ideas of communism while a student at the University of Havana, where he received a social science degree.

In 1953, the Castro brothers joined with others in an attack on a military barracks in Santiago. The attack failed, and the brothers wound up in prison, only to be eventually pardoned. Fleeing to Mexico, they brought together rebels and returned in 1956, organizing a guerilla band in the mountains of the eastern Sierra Maestra.



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By January of 1959, Castro led his victorious rebels into the streets of Havana, where he established a new government. Fulgencio Batista, who had ruled Cuba for several years, had shortly before fled the country.

Castro's improbable taking of absolute power is largely the result of media reports by the *New York Times* and machinations by the U.S. State Department under President Dwight Eisenhower. Speaking before the U.S. Senate in 1960, U.S. Ambassador to Cuba Earl Smith said, "Without the United States, Castro would not be in power today."

Later, Smith wrote a letter published in 1979 in the *New York Times*, in which he still held to that belief. "The final coup in favor of Castro came on December 17, 1958. On that date, in accordance with my instructions from the State Department, I personally conveyed to President Batista that the Department of State would view with skepticism any plan on his part, or any intention on his part, to remain in Cuba indefinitely. I had dealt him a mortal blow."

Inside Cuba, the people there felt the full weight of life under a brutal communist dictatorship. Soon after coming to power, Castro announced the need for gun registration, ostensibly to fight gangsterism on the island. Nine months later, he simply rounded up the guns, asserting that there was no longer any need for individual citizens to own guns.

Armando Lago, a Harvard-trained economist, has estimated that almost 78,000 Cubans may have died trying to flee Cuba since Castro imposed his communist dictatorship on the island. Lago, writing in *The Black Book of Communism*, was able to document nearly 100,000 killed by Castro, either by firing squads, assassinations, or deaths in prisons, or by attempting to flee the island through the treacherous waters between Cuba and Florida, 90 miles away.

Miguel Faria, writing in his book *Cuba in Revolution*, said, "Since Fidel Castro took over the island in 1959, the best figures that we can glean is that between 30,000 and 40,000 people have either been executed [by firing squad or at the hands of their jailers]." Of course, the exact number of Castro's killings cannot be known with certainty.

Then, of course, there is the reduction in the standard of living imposed on the country under the command economy of communism. Before Castro, the Cuban economy was ranked the second-highest in Latin America.

All in all, Fidel Castro brought much pain and misery to the world during his 90 years on Earth, and it is quite understandable that the Cuban community in Miami is relieved to hear of his passing. Unfortunately, many Americans will remain mystified at the intensity of animosity toward Castro by the South Florida Cuban community, considering the sugar-coated version of his life they have been presented by the mainstream media in the United States, who are simply continuing a coverup of the Castro record dating back to the 1950s.



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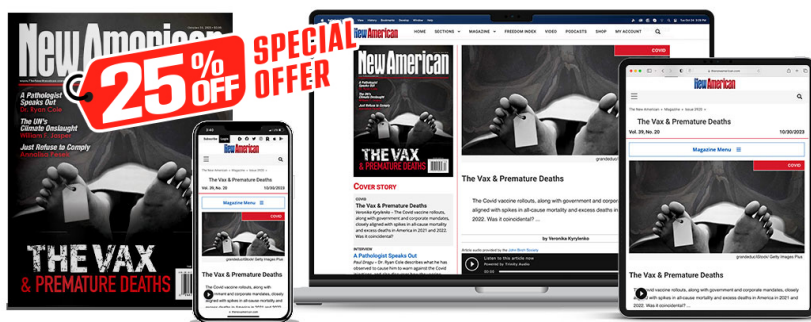
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