

# The Sound of the New War Drum Goes Tik-Tok

By [Wei Yu](#), [Nuvpreet Kalra](#), and [Melissa Garriga](#)

Global Research, March 31, 2023

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Law and Justice](#)

All Global Research articles can be read in 51 languages by activating the Translate Website button below the author's name.

To receive Global Research's Daily Newsletter (selected articles), [click here](#).

Click the share button above to email/forward this article to your friends and colleagues. Follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) and subscribe to our [Telegram Channel](#). Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

\*\*\*

*Last Thursday, a Congressional hearing took place where the TikTok CEO was grilled for five hours on the grounds of "security concerns." This was days after the FBI and DOJ launched an investigation on the Chinese-owned American company. **Isn't it ironic that while the US government is putting** TikTok under the magnifying glass, it's turning a blind eye to its own surveillance programs on the American people?*

Ten years ago, Edward Snowden told the whole world the truth about the US global surveillance programs. If Congress cares about our digital privacy, it should first begin by investigating the surveillance policies of its own US agencies. The campaign against TikTok is a fear-mongering tactic to wage war on China.

In 2020, the FBI used social media to monitor racial justice protesters who were targeted for arrests. For example, activist Mike Avery was arrested after posting about protests on Facebook, and his charges were dropped without explanation a few weeks later. An FBI official was so frustrated with the extensive social media surveillance that he told the Intercept, "Man, I don't even know what's legal anymore."

The dissonance between accusing TikTok of security concerns and working with other companies to invade people's privacy rings loudly in our ears.

Social media has long been a tool used by federal agencies to target individuals and communities designated as "threat." The Department of Homeland Security and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement have monitored the social media activities of immigrant rights activists. The State Department used social media screening to discriminate against the Muslim, Arab, Middle Eastern, and South Asian communities under the Trump administration's "Muslim ban."

Only last year that the post-9/11 NSA phone surveillance program was reported to have shut down. Major telecom companies like Verizon gave the government access to hundreds of millions of calls and texts. Dataminr, a startup Twitter partner, provided police with data

about BLM protests. One focus on ‘potential gang members’ targeted Black and Latinx people, including school-aged children.

Meta’s subsidiary WhatsApp was reportedly used by the Saudi government to hack journalist Jamal Khashoggi’s phone. Meanwhile, Meta itself used a VPN to spy on users’ smartphones for market research in exchange for bribes. Yet WhatsApp is not banned on government devices.

If our lawmakers are concerned about protecting digital privacy, then Congress should start with investigating American federal agencies. Unlike China as well as other Western countries, such as the EU, the US does not have any digital privacy laws on the federal level. The US could cooperate with China to better ensure people’s privacy is protected, instead of driving fear to target one single social media platform.

The ongoing effort to investigate and ban TikTok is not about our privacy, but about fueling more aggression against China. Fear-mongering about China has also caused the rise of anti-Asian racism in the US. In banning TikTok, the US is projecting its invasive policies onto another government. Warmongers are using the issue to create paranoia and justify even more aggression towards China.

It is not a coincidence that these recent bans have come about shortly after a Chinese weather balloon was shot down over the US. Privacy concerns are being used to wage war on China. The US should focus on passing federal data privacy laws instead of targeting one app. Double standards and warmongering against China need to stop. China is not our enemy.

\*

Note to readers: Please click the share button above. Follow us on Instagram and Twitter and subscribe to our Telegram Channel. Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

*Wei Yu is CODEPINK’S China is Not Our Enemy coordinator.*

*Nuvpreet Kalra is CODEPINK’s social media intern, and*

*Melissa Garriga is CODEPINK’s media relations manager.*

The original source of this article is Global Research  
Copyright © [Wei Yu](#), [Nuvpreet Kalra](#), and [Melissa Garriga](#), Global Research, 2023

---

**[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)**

**[Become a Member of Global Research](#)**

Articles by: [Wei Yu](#), [Nuvpreet Kalra](#), and [Melissa Garriga](#)

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)

[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)