

Michael Nixon |

Federal Trade Commission
Office of the Secretary
600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Suite CC-5610 (Annex C)

August 10, 2018

MICHAEL NIXSON

To: Whom It May Concern:

Re: Competition and Consumer Protection in the 21st Century Hearing Project Number P181201

The Congress has completely abdicated it's responsibility to "secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity" as enunciated in the opening lines of our Constitution. Instead in an environment where Congress accepts legal bribes from large multi-national corporations, they have repeatedly authorized illegal intrusions into the privacy of American citizens through the illegal activities of the national security state in the delusion that taking away rights somehow protects our citizens from enemies the national security state largely created. The Congress and the Supreme Court have methodically created rights for corporations that as such cannot possess rights. Rights flow from the nature of our being. A corporation being a legal fiction and convenience can only be endowed with privileges at best. And, like the privilege to drive on public streets, such privileges can be withdrawn and restricted at the behest of We The People. This confusion has created an unequal playing field in which those hiding behind these created privileges, disenfranchise and exploit us with the resources available to large business concerns.

With regard to social media, to enhance accountability, remove the protections social media/networking sites receive for what they do. They argue on the one hand that as conduits for the public, they should bare no responsibility for what the public puts on their sites and the law currently reflects this. Yet they don't hesitate to remove materials and ban individuals for their views. They can't censor content and then claim they can't be held accountable for the content that appears there.

With regard to privacy, it is the principal job of all three branches of government to enlarge not restrict the degree of privacy that it's citizens possess. The grossly illegal invasions of the NSA into our personal communications of all sorts have been well documented. Much of that abuse would be difficult to impossible without the willing cooperation of social networks like Google, Facebook and Twitter. I say willing because one only has to look as far as the complicity of Google with the Chinese Communists to enable search results to meet totalitarian Chinese censorship standards. Google has gone to great lengths to hide these projects from their own employees because they know many would object to such collaboration.

This all leads to the issue of these Internet services sharing our personal data. In principal all information about someone should belong to that person unless they explicitly allow other agents to use it in limited ways. Those with an agenda might argue that a full process of disclosure and consent is difficult to navigate. As a computer professional I would argue that is nonsense. Ideally, agents like Google and Facebook should be prohibited from using any kind of data about individuals without their explicit and detailed consent. To simplify the process of disclosure and consent by these Internet conglomerates, I have a constructive suggestion.

Require all business entities with over 50 employees to provide a detailed and comprehensive record of every single piece of data that is sold or given to third parties such that each month an individual can see what information was sold where they can drill down from high level summary information to the lowest level of data. Additionally, the parties to whom this information was sold/given would be identified including the government. Further, the individual who owns that data would have the option to exclude broad categories of data in the future. That would be your informed opt out provision that should make it easier for the consumer to know what they are opting into and out of.

Ideally such reporting requirements would make it too onerous for the Googles and Facebooks of the world to continue operating as they do but I suspect they could crank out the appropriate reporting in an afternoon. It probably already exists except for the opt out piece.

Of course they don't have to sell our data at all. They can find other business models. There are plenty of people out there ready to step in and do it right.

Sincerely,

Michael Nixon