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Real reasons for the hysteria about TikTok



Sources: By Wereld Morgen

Translated from Dutch for Rebellion by Sven Magnus

Belgium, Denmark and the European Commission ban officials from using TikTok, following the example of the United States. This prohibition is completely unfounded, but it is far from harmless. It is imposed in the framework of the new Cold War against China. Is war fever taking hold of us?

The different governments in Belgium prohibit TikTok. Officials can no longer use the app. According to the Ministers responsible, implementation should even be removed from All mobiles used professionally in the departments Government.

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TikTok It is very popular among young people. It is a platform that distributes Short and carefree videos. At first it was mainly about viral dances, but quickly became an important News source for young people. In the United States almost one hundred millions of people use the app.

The Popular video app has been in the spotlight for a while. In Europe, pressure is being put to ban it, and in Canada and the United States. United long ago officials were banned from using the Application E there is even talk in the Senate of a national ban

Herself They give two reasons for banning the app. TikTok could Collect massive data from Western users. In addition, the Platform could be used for propaganda purposes. It is feared that ByteDance, the company behind TikTok, looks forced to cooperate with the Chinese government.

Without foundation

The Measures are unfounded for several reasons.

In First of all, it is obvious that senior officials do not leave sensitive information on your mobile phones or PC. But not that. It depends on an application. Sensitive information is protected by encrypting it, not allowing or eliminating this or that application.

In In this context, it is significant that Deputy Prime Minister Petra De Sutter and the Minister of Defence (!) Belgium's Ludivine Dedonder to follow using TikTok.

Secondly, for any application to work in Europe today, it must comply with the privacy protection rules, better known by the English acronym GDPR. There's no 100% guarantee, but in that regard, TikTok is just as secure as other apps.

The ethical hacker Baptiste Robert observes, "As far as we can see, in its current state, TikTok doesn't shows any suspicious behavior and does not release any data unusual. Getting data on the user's device is quite a bit common in the mobile world and we would get similar results with Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram and others."

And yes, it has been proven in the past that TikTok has violated the privacy of certain journalists. But that's the same, even worse, with other apps. There is no doubt that the CIA directly or indirectly monitors social networks that it deems of interest. Thus, it is known that Google is full of former CIA agents.

In Other countries intelligence agencies will also make their work. In 2020 it was revealed that Israeli intelligence spied on Through whatsapp.

In third, Security of the Belgian State has not yet been able to identify any cases of espionage on through TikTok. In any case, the application does not contain No explicit spying software.

To the After all, the Chinese government does not need such an application. to spy. If you want to do it, you will use something different and more sophisticated than a simple hot air balloon or an application of Funny videos.

The The real problem is not in espionage. This is the Privacy. There is no doubt that TikTok collects a lot of information about the Users. But they are not the only ones. Apps like Facebook and Instagram, and many others seemingly innocuous, collect data and They sell them to data brokers who, in turn, sell them to Companies that can profit from this treasure trove of data.

In an article published in *Foreign Policy* two Teachers explain it like this:

'Yes We want to address the real problem, we have to pass laws serious about the privacy and not to set up a theater about security. These laws are necessary to prevent our data from being collected, analysed and sold by anyone. These Laws would protect us in the long run and not just of the application of the week'.

The True reasons

The The real reasons for the TikTok ban have nothing to do with They do with espionage or security, but reside elsewhere.

One The first reason is of a commercial nature. TikTok has managed to break the monopoly of its American competitors. These are Alphabet (Youtube) and Meta (Facebook and Instagram). Last year made huge profits, 279,000 million dollars and 117,000 million dollars respectively.

Recently well-known rapper and actor Snoop Dogg signed a deal to exclusivity with TikTok and not with Spotify or Apple Store. Given the Huge profit potential, the stakes are high.

And They don't like to see those profit opportunities lost in United States. As happened with Huawei (5G), Washington wants Literally eliminate Chinese competitors by banning them. That It's called an economic war. As usual in the In recent years, Europe has danced to the sound of the United States.

One The second reason is geopolitics. In the eyes of the United States, China It becomes more and more a threat and a malevolent power. Just think about the hysteria around the hot air balloon. and in the rise of war rhetoric around the question of Taiwan. We are in a new Cold War.

States The United States has built a military fence around of China. Washington is also establishing more and more every day. Military alliances with countries in the region. It seems that States United Rushes to prepare for conflict armed with China.



Graphic: The points are military bases. Arrows are missiles of intended range.

All the fuss around TikTok serves to develop or reinforce an enemy image of China. Public opinion is important to participate in military conflicts. The ban on TikTok falls within this context and is far from innocent.

One Once again, Europe and Belgium are perfectly following in the footsteps of the older brother. For the sinologist Rogier Creemers, who teaches at Leiden University, banning TikTok in the service phones of officials is like a policy symbolic. "In this, we follow States United where everything to do with China is currently demonic."

¿When we will finally succeed in Europe in charting our own course, based on in common sense and not intoxicated by the fever of war? It seems one of the most important challenges we face in these times of war.

Source: <https://www.dewereldmorgen.be/artikel/2023/03/10/waarom-de-hysterie-rond-tiktok-verre-van-onschuldig-is/>

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