



# Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA  
Tel 020 7219 6120 website [www.parliament.uk/cms](http://www.parliament.uk/cms)

Sir Nick Clegg  
Vice President of Global Affairs and Communications  
Facebook Inc.  
1 Hacker Way  
Menlo Park  
CA  
94025

5 September 2019

Dear Sir Nick,

## **Outstanding requests regarding previous correspondence**

I am writing to bring to your attention several outstanding issues that the Committee feel have not been adequately addressed in Facebook's response to our letters, received from Rebecca Stimson on 12 August 2019.

## **Ignoring employee calls for a Cambridge Analytica investigation**

We are disappointed that the letter does not engage with the substance of our concerns about when red flags were raised, namely, that employees in Facebook's political advertising group were clearly sufficiently concerned to request an investigation into scraping, and later described Cambridge Analytica as 'sketchy to say the least'<sup>1</sup>. Furthermore, the statement that scraping "is unfortunately common for any internet service"<sup>2</sup> does not explain why your employees were motivated to call for an investigation into Cambridge Analytica in September 2015 or why their calls were subsequently ignored.

As such, we therefore request a response to the following questions:

1. What precisely was the nature of the concerns raised by Facebook's employees in 2015 (and since)?
2. Why were calls for an investigation not heeded in 2015?
3. When were concerns first raised by Facebook employees that Cambridge Analytica was receiving data from other developers, including Aleksandr Kogan?

## **Inconsistencies regarding legal certifications**

The letter also raises further questions regarding the legal certification you received from Cambridge Analytica that they had deleted the data and its derivatives. In the letter, Ms Stimson claimed that:

We also followed up other media reports about Cambridge Analytica's activity to see if we could find evidence of abuse, but this led us back to their legal certification from January 2016 that they had deleted the data, as we made clear to the Committee in our evidence.<sup>3</sup>

Mike Schroepfer told us that Facebook had received the legal certification prior to our questioning of Simon Milner, Facebook's Policy Director, in February 2018.<sup>4</sup> However, the SEC Complaint explicitly states that you did not receive certification from Cambridge Analytica until almost a year after you

<sup>1</sup> *SEC v. Facebook, Inc. Complaint*, pp.8-9.

<sup>2</sup> Rebecca Stimson, Facebook (12 August 2019), Correspondence, p.1.

<sup>3</sup> Rebecca Stimson, Facebook (12 August 2019), Correspondence, p.1.

<sup>4</sup> DCMS Committee (26 April 2018), Oral evidence, HC 363, Q2411 [Ian C. Lucas MP, Mr. Schroepfer]



received certification from Dr. Kogan (which evidence you submitted to us confirms was received in June 2016<sup>5</sup>) and at least 18 months after the Facebook found out about the transfer.

From the SEC Complaint:

[...] in April 2017, Cambridge provided Facebook with a similar certification reporting that Cambridge had received from the researcher underlying raw Facebook user data in addition to the personality scores, as well as that it had deleted that data.<sup>6</sup>

If, as the letter says, “Facebook employees therefore believed as early as January 2016 that the situation had been resolved”<sup>7</sup>, this begs the question as to why Facebook employees felt like a resolution had been reached despite not receiving relevant legal certifications for months (in Kogan’s case) or years (in the case of Cambridge) afterwards. We therefore ask:

4. Did you receive Cambridge Analytica’s legal certification in January 2016, as claimed in your letter, or April 2017, as stated by the SEC?

#### **Outstanding request for apps removed from Facebook**

Though your letter reiterates your denial of the allegations made by the Washington DC Attorney General that Facebook knew of third party applications that violated its policies and failed to take reasonable measures against them, the letter fails to produce a list of apps that have been removed from the platform (or indeed, were the subject of any action taken against them whatsoever). In our letter dated 17 July, we noted that such a list would confirm that Facebook’s evidence to our Committee was consistent with its denial of the Attorney General’s allegations. Moreover, this list was promised by Lord Richard Allan when he gave evidence in Westminster to the International Grand Committee on Disinformation over nine months ago.

Given that you cite an “app developer investigation is ongoing” and that you have made an “extensive effort” to “regularly take action against apps and developers who violate our policies”,<sup>8</sup> we believe it is therefore reasonable to request that you provide the Committee with:

5. An interim list of action taken against apps and developers that have violated Facebook’s policies to date (with a final report to follow when your investigation is complete);
6. Dates as to when we can reasonably receive updates on your efforts, so both parties can receive appropriate closure to our correspondence on this matter.

We request these clarifications by 20 September 2019.

Yours sincerely,

Damian Collins MP  
Chair, Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee

<sup>5</sup> Rebecca Stimson, Facebook (14 May 2018), Correspondence, p.19.

<sup>6</sup> *SEC v. Facebook, Inc.* Complaint, pp.8.

<sup>7</sup> Rebecca Stimson, Facebook (12 August 2019), Correspondence, p.1.

<sup>8</sup> Rebecca Stimson, Facebook (12 August 2019), Correspondence, p.2.