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Written by **C. Mitchell Shaw** on January 11, 2021

Parler Purge Opens a Whole New Can of Worms

In the ongoing Big-Tech purge of any voice that is considered off the liberal reservation, Parler — the free-speech social-media site recently preferred by many conservatives — was burned to the ground over the weekend. First Google and Apple announced that they would both be removing the Parler app from their app stores. Then, Amazon — which hosted the site via its AWS hosting service — pulled the plug on the site, taking it completely offline.

As *Business Insider* reported:

> Amazon announced its intention to sever ties with Parler on Sunday, saying it "cannot provide services to a customer that is unable to effectively identify and remove content that encourages or incites violence against others."

> "Because Parler cannot comply with our terms of service and poses a very real risk to public safety, we plan to suspend Parler's account effective Sunday, January 10th, at 11:59PM PST," a spokesperson said in an emailed statement to Insider.

And:

> Parler CEO John Matze told Fox News on Sunday that the platform would "get back online as quickly as possible," and that the site could be down for up to a week. In a later post on Parler reported by Newsweek Matze said it would "likely be down longer than expected."

Matze also wrote, "We have our software and everyone's data ready to go. Rather it's that Amazon's, Google's and Apple's statements to the press about dropping our access has caused most of our other vendors to drop their support for us as well. And most people with enough servers to host us have shut their doors to us."

Blaming Parler for the "violent insurrection" at the Capitol last week when protesters breached the Capitol Building, Google, Apple, and Amazon set their sights on destroying the site. Matze was quoted by *The Epoch Times* as saying, "there is no evidence Parler was used to coordinate the events," adding, "Parler has no groups-style feature, and Facebook was the number one tool for coordinating meetups for that event."

Facts and reality be damned, Parler will be the victim of a Big-Tech witch hunt. It does not matter that Parler was not — *could not have been* — the platform used to coordinate an "insurrection." What matters is that Parler will take the blame for it anyway.

The Epoch Times report also states that Parler is "prepared to take full legal action," according to a statement Matze e-mailed to the news organization.

As *The Epoch Times* reported:

> The targeted moderation by these companies against Parler came after civil unrest and acts of violence marred a largely peaceful protest at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6. A group of rioters and a minority of protesters waving American and Trump flags illegally stormed the Capitol building as lawmakers were counting electoral votes in a joint session of Congress. The mayhem on the day left five people dead, including one police officer, and dozens of officers injured.
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> In response to the Capitol breach, a number of Silicon Valley technology companies ramped up their policing of statements and comments from President Donald Trump, conservatives, and other voices they say may cause harm. Twitter on Jan. 8 permanently removed Trump's account on its platform and justified its censorship by saying the president had violated its "Glorification of Violence Policy" after he posted a message urging protesters to remain peaceful and leave the Capitol. The Trump campaign Twitter account has also been removed.
>
> Parler, which has attracted a large following of classical liberal and conservative-leaning users, appeared to have been targeted for lacking a system to "implement robust moderation for egregious content."

Parler has launched a lawsuit against Amazon and is in negotiations with other hosting services to bring the site back online, but as Matze stated in the above quote, "most people with enough servers to host us have shut their doors to us."

This likely means that the return of Parler is unlikely. Worse yet, it opens the question of what happens to Parler users' data in the aftermath of the purge. Because, as Gizmodo reports, a "researcher" (read: leftist hacktivist) worked to "create a lasting public record for future researchers to sift through." She did this by archiving every post from January 6. She described her catalog of user data as a bevy of "very incriminating" evidence. That data includes users' location information.

This, of course, brings up the issue of privacy. Even Gizmodo acknowledged this, writing, "The privacy implications are obvious, but the copious data may also serve as a fertile hunting ground for law enforcement." So, privacy be damned along with facts and reality. The end — as always — justifies the means.

Given that this is not the first time Parler has been used to expose personal data of its users (a hack of an unsecured AWS server in November exposed names, passwords, and e-mail addresses of users), perhaps the lesson to be learned is this: Using social media platforms for conservative-leaning ideology is a recipe for disaster. The only exception to that would be something that is end-to-end encrypted and zero-knowledge. Because if a company collects user data, it can — and will — be compromised.

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