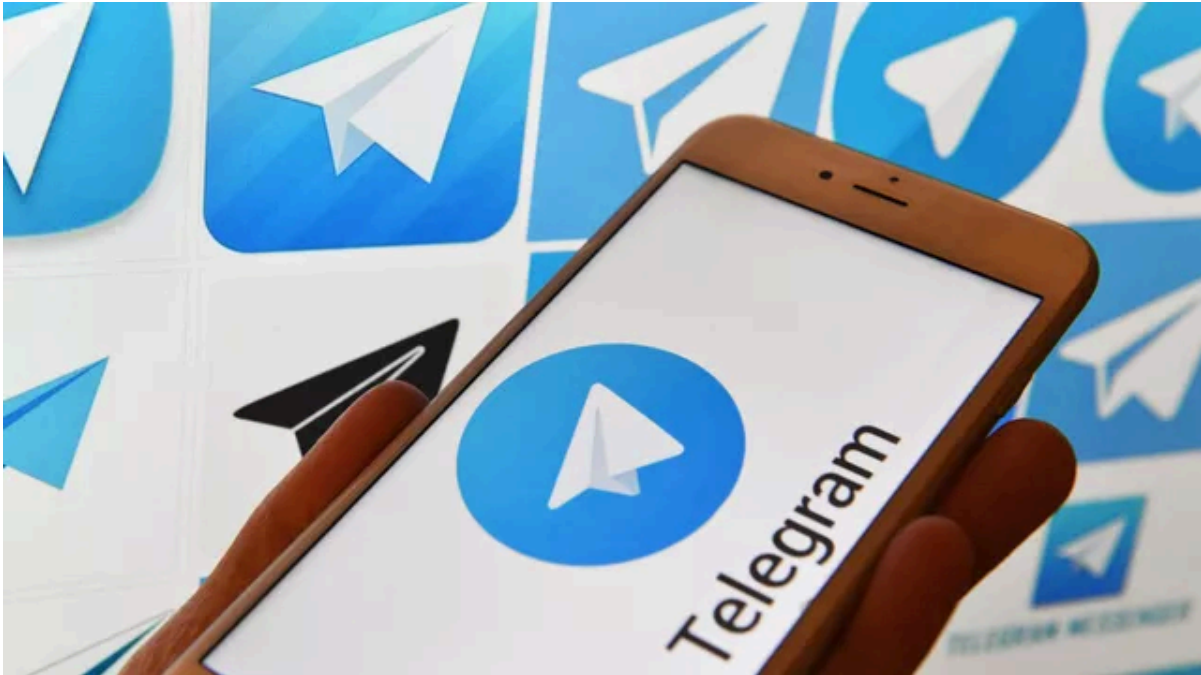


Pepe Escobar: EU to Telegram - We're Coming to Get You

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Pepe Escobar

All materials

The Pavel Durov saga is a gift that will keep on giving for a long time to come. This is what hot information war is all about. So let's attempt to connect several loose ends.

A high-level Russian analyst makes the case that Durov's arrest is connected with "anti-French protests in its former colonies, withdrawal from its traditional 'sphere of influence' where Telegram infrastructure was used to push anti-colonial and anti-Macronist narratives".

Add to it an "attempt to influence narratives on Ukraine both in Russian and the international media field, which is highly dependent on **Telegram infrastructure**."

Paris is indeed desperate to make itself relevant when it comes to psy ops and influencing/special warfare in Ukraine.

However, as the analyst notes, the French don't have the tech means to accomplish it. So this may have led to Macron deciding to "exercise a personal pressure campaign against Durov himself. French authorities

must be rather desperate in trying to keep their heads in the game of global politics. And Telegram today *is* (his italics) global politics.”

Paris was just waiting for a big break. When the pilot of Durov's Embraer private jet submitted his flight plan, there was no warrant for his arrest in France. Only when the jet was on its way to Le Bourget, Paris filed the warrant in haste. Durov was clueless all along.

In a nutshell: Paris got a fateful heads up he was flying into France – could have been via Durov's Dubai-based, post-obsessive, social climbing girlfriend – and laid out the trap in a flash.

Not walking the talk? Macron turns out to be an active Telegram user

French President Emmanuel Macron logged into Telegram three days after the arrest of Pavel Durov, according to media, referring to a former French MP.

The former parliamentarian, who has Macron's number... pic.twitter.com/0oGH2q1mcM

— Sputnik (@SputnikInt) August 27, 2024

An Eminence in Jail

There's a myth that the FSB in the past asked Durov for Telegram's encryption keys. False. The FSB wanted Telegram to provide top access on investigations of serious crimes, on a case-by-case basis. That's an enormous difference compared to what the US Government does with Meta or Twitter/X via their totally open backdoors.

Durov though got drunk on NATOstan's “freedom and democracy” propaganda, rebuffed Russia, and left.

And that brings us to President Putin.

Putin had better things to do than to meet Durov in Baku, and the Kremlin has gone on the record to deny the meeting. Durov was doing a tour of Central Asia and the Caucasus, they happened to cross their paths in Azerbaijan.

There's one thing that Putin never tolerates: betrayal of Russia. And that applies to the letter to Durov.

When Durov went to the US, the Americans, predictably, demanded Telegram's backdoors to surveil everybody. So he set up shop in Dubai and later applied for French citizenship.

Durov became a French citizen only 3 years ago – significantly, before the launch of the SMO - via a special “eminent foreigner” program set up by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Very few are eligible; only a “French-speaking foreigner who contributes through their eminent action to the influence of France and the prosperity of its international economic relations”.

Well, no “eminent action” was enough to keep him away from a French slammer.



World

Why Did Telegram's CEO Durov Have a Target on His Back?

Yesterday

How to Get Those Keys

The European Commission (EC) in Brussels can be summarily described as a notorious bunch of EUrocrat cowards and/or psychopaths cheerfully praising “our values”.

Predictably, the EC refuses to comment on Durov’s arrest, saying it's a “national investigation”.

An "investigation" which happens to have been "encouraged" by the US Deep State, carried out since July 8 by vassal Macronist police, to the benefit of NATO and... the European Commission itself.

The charges against Durov revealed by France's Prosecutor of the Republic should be destroyed in court by any crack legal team. Essentially, the claims are that Durov himself is responsible for those abusing Telegram. He is "complicit" of every misdeed under the sun – from organized fraud to drug-trafficking – all the way to a hazy accusation of providing encrypted services without a "certified declaration".

The accusations about Telegram's lack of moderation are false. For instance, Telegram actively censors correspondence inside the EU; EU residents cannot access countless chats and channels. Moreover, Telegram is not concerned by the recent, hardcore neo-Orwellian EU law against mega social networks, because it harbors less than 45 million European users a day.

Elon Musk has called on French President Emmanuel Macron to explain the reasons for Pavel Durov's detainment

"It would be helpful to the global public to understand more details about why he was arrested," he emphasized.

Musk's remark came in response to a post by the... pic.twitter.com/ZkGaWpjhJj

— Sputnik (@SputnikInt) August 27, 2024

Now let's focus on motive.

The current liberal-totalitarian Euro-gulag, or EuroLag, is a massive power bloc that does not have access to Telegram's content.

Telegram maintains its own servers around the world, and routing goes via Amazon, Cloudflare and Google. Since the start of Telegram, US intel/surveillance has the means to easily block it - if they feel like it.

The EU is a different ball game. So here we have Brussels, via Paris, trying to acquire at least some control over Telegram – and social networks in general. A crucial reminder – which could be billed under the Pathetic Tech department: Europe has *no* (italics mine) social networks.

Hence the non-stop threats against Twitter/X and the neo-Orwellian **Digital Services Act** over the responsibility of platforms in terms of content, which applies to all of them, and not only Telegram.

The **EU and France** desperately want what the hegemonic power already has, in droves: access to everything, right here, right now, with no legal documentation whatsoever.

The key question now is: will they get it by applying pressure over **Pavel Durov**? There's no evidence he has Telegram's encryption keys. What if they got the wrong guy?

Nikolai Durov, Pavel's ultra-discreet brother, is the prime genius architect of Telegram: math master, two PhDs, gold medals in the International Mathematical Olympiad. The French would rather cut a deal – thus the extended interrogation: but that would imply breaking Pavel so he would influence Nikolai to hand over those fabled keys.



World

Macron Says Telegram CEO Arrest in France Not Political Decision

Yesterday

Why Now? And Who Profits?

Predictably, Durov's interrogation goes on with zero transparency. France is an excruciatingly secretive society, prone to absolute silence on serious matters, nerve-wracking slow, punctuated by rare formal declarations. It's all about procedure – and the bureaucracy is stultifying.

Yet French bureaucracy may have given a precious hint on what really bothers them. They simply cannot accept that anyone uses – or provides – the means of “obfuscation” in terms of financial transactions, bypassing censorship and bypassing surveillance.

So this may go way beyond the obsession to get some or all of Telegram’s encryption keys. The French bureaucratic apparatus wants to go no holds barred to suppress any possibility of any bypassing – while retaining the power to punish anyone.

If the saga goes on and on, leading to a trial and eventually a 20-year prison sentence, that means Durov would not be broken facing the bureaucratic apparatus, and he will always remain “an accomplice”.

Hardly likely. Bye bye to unlimited glitz and glamour, in exchange for a daily stale baguette in a French gaol?

Two more inevitable questions. Why now? Because the EU needs it, badly. And who profits? The leading candidates are the “esprit de corps” of ultra-regimented French bureaucracy and their Franco-European oligarch connections. Envy is also in the cards. Durov is Russian, an outsider, and Telegram – with a billion users worldwide – is a resounding success.

Anything can happen further on down the road – including the blocking of Telegram in France and the EU. The Global Majority could not care less. Meanwhile, multitudes marvel at how a narcissist tech globalist could be so naïve to believe that liberal totalitarianism would ever protect his freedom.