

# UK lawmakers call on Zuckerberg to appear before them

26 April 2018, by Danica Kirka



A protester wearing a mask with the face of Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, in between men wearing angry face emoji masks, during a protest against Facebook outside Portcullis in London, Thursday, April 26, 2018, as the Chief Technical Officer of Facebook Mike Schroepfer is due to give evidence on the companies use of data from its customers in front of a Parliamentary Select Committee. (AP Photo/Alastair Grant)

The U.K. parliament's media committee demanded Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg appear before the panel after lawmakers said the senior executive who testified Thursday failed to fully answer their questions about the data protection scandal that has engulfed the company.

Committee members didn't hide their frustration with Facebook's [chief technical officer](#), Mike Schroepfer, who was forced to defend the company against suggestions that it was cavalier with user data and has done little to stem the spread of fake news. Facebook dispatched the unassuming engineer to London despite a previous request for Zuckerberg to appear.

During a four-hour plus session that covered many

of Facebook's perceived sins, lawmaker Julian Knight accused the company of "bullying journalists, threatening academic institutions and impeding investigations by legal authorities," before declaring the company to be "a morality-free zone."

Schroepfer said he "respectfully disagreed" with such characterizations.

Immediately after the session, [committee](#) Chairman Damian Collins issued a statement saying that said Schroepfer answer's fell short "on 40 separate points," particularly in regard to Cambridge Analytica and associated companies, which allegedly misused data from 87 million Facebook accounts.

The committee asked Zuckerberg to appear on May 24, during what it described as a planned trip to Europe to give testimony to the European Parliament.



Collins sharply worded statement came after a session in which lawmakers demanded specificity, particularly in regard to the social media [company's](#) actions on elections and alleged Russian interference.

In one moment of candor, Schroepfer acknowledged that he himself was disappointed with Facebook's handling of Russian disinformation campaigns.



Chief Technical Officer of Facebook Mike Schroepfer leaves Portcullis House after giving evidence to a Parliamentary select committee on digital, culture, media and sport in London, Thursday, April 26, 2018. The UK parliament's media committee has criticized Facebook's response to allegations that data from millions of accounts was misused during elections in the United States and Britain as they grilled one of the company's senior executives about the scandal. (AP Photo)

"As an American citizen living in California, Mr. Zuckerberg does not normally come under the jurisdiction of the U.K. Parliament, but he will the next time he enters the country," Collins said.

"We hope that he will respond positively to our request, but if not the committee will resolve to issue a formal summons for him to appear when he is next in the U.K."

Chief Technical Officer of Facebook Mike Schroepfer leaves Portcullis House after giving evidence to a Parliamentary select committee on digital, culture, media and sport in London, Thursday, April 26, 2018. The UK parliament's media committee has criticized Facebook's response to allegations that data from millions of accounts was misused during elections in the United States and Britain as they grilled one of the company's senior executives about the scandal. (AP Photo)

"We were slow to understand the impact at the time, and I am way more disappointed in this than

you are," Schroepfer said to laughter from the room.

"It's a high bar," Collins retorted.

"I'm sorry, I shouldn't have said that," Schroepfer replied. "It's something we're working very hard on."

© 2018 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.

APA citation: UK lawmakers call on Zuckerberg to appear before them (2018, April 26) retrieved 20 September 2019 from <https://phys.org/news/2018-04-uk-lawmakers-zuckerberg.html>

*This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.*