

Potential Problem With Silicon Valley Whistle-Blower Project

By Justin Howard

There are a thousand James Damore's ready to come forward and spill the beans on the Silicon Valley Mafia but the tales of Gary Webb and many other dead whistle-blowers has them on edge.

 GARY WEBB MURDER

Gary D. Conley, Rajeev Motwaini, Forrest Hayes and a host of other claimed Silicon Valley whistle-blowers turned up mysteriously dead. The Silicon Valley Mafia seems to be brutal.

In addition, one of the whistle-blower sponsors: Pierre Omidyar, of the Intercept, is already accused of being a "Ringer".

Peter Thiel's people, Congressional staff and federal law enforcement staff have expressed concerns about Omidyar. Some feel that he is a watch-dog friend of the Silicon Valley Mafia who is on standby to alert them of any red flags.

Omidyar is the money behind Gawker Media, The Intercept, Ebay and huge political machinations. Glenn Greenwald, who writes for the Intercept, is certainly not going to bite the hand that feeds him.

At least two potential whistle-blowers told me that Pierre Omidyar has used his Gawker Media tabloid empire to run "hit-jobs" and character assassinations against whistle-blowers in order to prevent them from speaking out.

A whistle-blower sponsoring organization must be squeaky clean. As long as Gawker Media's Omidyar is on board. It is not. Gawker Media also receives funding from a Russian mobster on the CIA's and FBI's organized crime "Watch List". The company you keep reflects the organization within. Can the Signals Network be a force for good or just another compromised facade? Time will tell:

Whistleblowers are being offered a “witness protection scheme” to expose “wrongdoing” in the technology industry. An American non-for-profit organisation founded by a French entrepreneur and philanthropist has said it will provide individuals working within “big data” financial and legal support if they are able provide

information that shows how the public is being “harm[ed], exploited or misled”.

The Signals Network, which was set up last year, is working with a consortium of journalists around the world and aims to provide assistance to potential whistle-blowers to ensure that powerful corporations can be investigated.

Newspapers and websites in America and Europe, including The Telegraph, have issued a “call for information” to people working in “big data” who are able to show how the public are being misled or that the information they have provided is being misused.

Other organisations involved in the project include Mediapart, which was set up by the former editor of Le Monde, Die Viet in Germany, the Intercept and WikiTribune.

The reporters will work together to examine information that is provided and a committee will decide whether potential sources

have provided sufficiently strong information to warrant support from the organisation.

In recent years, concerns have arisen about the role of technology companies and how “big data” may be being misused by firms.

Earlier this year, it emerged that a Cambridge professor used a personality quiz on Facebook to obtain data from 50 million users without their knowledge.



Founder Gilles Raymond CREDIT: THE SIGNALS NETWORK

The academic then allegedly passed the data to a company called Cambridge Analytica, in violation of Facebook’s rules and without the company knowing.

It also emerged that Cambridge Analytica harvested data on 50 million Americans without their permission and failed to ensure the data was deleted – it was allegedly used to develop an algorithm used

in the US presidential election to target voters for the Trump campaign.

The controversy led to more than \$36 billion (£26 billion) being wiped off the value of Facebook, as investors reacted to the revelations. The firm have denied that the data available to Cambridge Analytica constituted a data breach and any wrongdoing.

Earlier this month, experts said that social media and online gaming firms should have a “duty of care” to protect children from mental ill health, abuse and addictive behaviour, amid concerns that social media firms are cynically targeting children using addictive “hooks”.

The Signals was set up by French businessman Giles Raymond and has an operating budget of several hundred of thousands of dollars to provide financial, legal, psychological and public relations assistance to individuals who are able to provide information that exposes wrongdoing.

Mr Raymond found a company News Republic that was bought by Cheetah Mobile in 2016 for \$57 million. In 2017, he founded the Signals Network.

The Signals Network aims to provide the equivalent of a witness protection program for whistle-blowers.

Today's "Call for Information", which was made by the newspapers and websites, asked for whistle-blowers to provide information that exposed wrongdoing, but also that could "shed light on commonly misunderstood or questioned practices, for example, why companies have chosen specific product updates and their effect on consumers".

Once the information has been provided to the reporters, each case will be "vetted" by a committee, and, based on the public interest and risk exposure, the Signals Network will decide on the level of protection to be offered.

Mr Raymond said: "Talking to whistle-blowers we identified key needs and expectations". To help support them the organisation "will

set up its own equivalent of the witness protection program for qualifying whistleblowers ", he said.

To find out more, go to telegraph.co.uk/bigdatacall/