



Internet Turns 50; Creator Warns Of Subversion

In a vacuum, the Internet is neutral but add humans, and things spin out of control. Evil humans do evil things and the Internet has greatly expanded their capacity to spread evil and debauch humanity. □ TN Editor

World Wide Web founder Sir Tim Berners-Lee has warned that the internet's power for good is being "subverted" by those spreading hatred and threatening democracy, as the technology marked its 50th birthday.

Sir Tim urged governments, campaign groups and individuals to back a new plan from his foundation to make the internet safe, fair and accessible to all.

The computer scientist spoke out on the 50th anniversary of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) professor Len Kleinrock sending the first message on the Arpanet network of computers, which

would eventually become the internet.

Twenty years later, Sir Tim created the World Wide Web - first proposed as an information management system while he was working for the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (Cern) - which led to the mainstream establishment of the technology.

“It’s astonishing to think the internet is already half a century old. But its birthday is not altogether a happy one,” he said.

“The internet - and the World Wide Web it enabled - have changed our lives for the better and have the power to transform millions more in the future. But increasingly we’re seeing that power for good being subverted, whether by scammers, people spreading hatred or vested interests threatening democracy.”

He confirmed that the Web Foundation, the group he founded to campaign for the open web as a public good and basic right, would publish its Contract for the Web next month - a collection of pledges aimed at all areas of society and their commitment to protecting the web in the future.

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