

## It Is Our DUTY To Use The Internet, While We Can...

Who controls the internet? The truth people do not want to hear is that it is none other than the US government, the root servers may technically be under control of ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers) - a private US company set up by the Department of Commerce, in truth the DoC have never let go of the reigns.

The United States can influence what country codes are permitted and who will run each, which continues to vex nations like Pakistan and Brazil who have been outspoken critics of the United States' online influence [2]. There have recently been serious wrangling by the EU and the UN for shared state control [3] but one thing is absolutely certain: the myth that the internet is a free-speech playground beyond the control of the powers that be is just that: a myth.

Despite this, the internet certainly represents the greatest tool the people have to spread information and views internationally, it has been a thorn in the side of a political system previously secure in the knowledge that the main stream media would watch their back. But all the signs point to this being short lived. China, it has long been known, has existing and rapidly advancing forms of internet control and oppression of the free speech this medium does allow. They have blocked email and search engines, they have blocked foreign news and political sites, most recently they have started to filter "banned terms" with punishments ranging (according to Amnesty[4]) from imprisonment to death.

Burma is following suit rapidly, but in truth many countries considered to be free have some form of internet control- the full list being:

- Cote d'Ivoire
- Egypt
- Ethiopia
- Kenya
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Senegal
- South Africa
- Tunisia
- Zimbabwe
- Australia
- India
- Philippines
- Singapore
- South Korea
- Thailand
- Austria
- Belgium
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- France
- Germany
- Hungary
- Italy
- Russia
- Spain
- Switzerland
- Turkey
- Ukraine
- United Kingdom
- Uzbekistan
- Argentina
- Brazil
- Costa Rica

Peru  
Uruguay  
Bahrain  
Jordan  
Qatar  
Saudi Arabia  
United Arab Emirates (Including Oman and Dubai)  
Regional overview  
Canada  
United States of America

That's pretty much everyone! [5] While the controls apparent in many of these countries are a far cry from those seen practiced in China and Burma, many regulations relating to common-sense measures to combat child pornography and criminal activities otherwise, what is worrying is not so much the state we are in now, but the pliancy of internet companies to acquiesce to draconian state laws in search of a buck.

The number of "cyber-dissidents" currently imprisoned in China, officially (an important distinction to make when considering China's track record with "official" figures), is 42. These human rights abuses could not have happened without the help and technical know-how of companies such as Google, Yahoo and Microsoft. Yahoo! has turned over information to the police that helped send journalist Shi Tao to prison for 10 years (Shi had posted a list of topics that Chinese newspapers were forbidden to cover, including the anniversary of the 1989 Tiananmen massacre). Microsoft's MSN portal blocks the words "democracy" and "freedom" from the sites it hosts, while Google omits all manner of "dangerous" websites from its search results.[6]

Are these companies "evil"? Only to the extent that the root of all evil is money and the Chinese market is too sweet to pass up on.

So how long would these profit-making giants hold off enforcing new EU or US internet laws if it was collectively decided that internet freedom was a danger? The evidence in China says they would not even try.

So far Google has resisted Gonzales' demands that they hand over information on everything their users search for and now the US are raking them over the coals in court. The U.S. Department of Justice filed a motion in federal court seeking a court order that would compel search engine company Google, Inc. to turn over "a multi-stage random sample of one million URL's" from Google's database, and a computer file with "the text of each search string entered onto Google's search engine over a one-week period. [7] The demand does include the caveat that this be absent any information identifying the person who entered such query, but we cannot rule out that this could be the next step if they found people looking at "dangerous" words or topics.

It is worrying enough, to me, that Google is known to keep permanent records of everything we search for on their engines, their track record in China shows that should the US or the EU follow suit - then Google and others would meekly hand over our human rights for a shiny piece of silver.

But the people would never allow or accept China style internet control of the internet within the US or EU would they? Not yet. Before 9/11 no one would have allowed people to be held without trial, for 28 days in the UK or indefinitely in Guantanamo. No American would have accepted a "Patriot Act" which abused and tore to shreds their beloved constitution. No one would have accepted that torture was acceptable as long as it got results, that "pre-emptive war" could be anything but illegal. 9/11 changed all that in a day. What will they ask us to give up if another false flag attack occurs, and what chance will those who disagree have to argue against a back drop of hysteria and blind patriotism. I propose the first thing to go will be net-freedom.

The Neo-Cons, through their wooden toy mouth piece Bush and other means have already

begun the slow conflating of terrorism and "conspiracy theorists", or terrorism and the internet.

Bush stated a month after 9/11:

*"Let us never tolerate outrageous conspiracy theories concerning the attacks of September the 11th; malicious lies that attempt to shift the blame away from the terrorists, themselves, away from the guilty."*

This theme has been followed up more recently, in a National Security Council article on the white house website entitled "**Strategy for Winning the War on Terror**" [8] in understanding how the internet comes into the Neo-Con strategy for hegemony this article is essential reading.

After a few scraps of nonsense propaganda telling us that terrorism has nothing to do with poverty, with foreign policy, with Palestine or with war they let us know what DOES cause terrorists to want to kill and maim- number three on the list?

### **Conspiracy Theorists!**

"Subcultures of conspiracy and misinformation. Terrorists recruit more effectively from populations whose information about the world is contaminated by falsehoods and corrupted by conspiracy theories. The distortions keep alive grievances and filter out facts that would challenge popular prejudices and self-serving propaganda."

So "conspiracy theorists" cause terrorism? What about their most common conduit – the net. Later in the document we see more linking of terrorism and the internet specifically:

"[Terrorists] use today's technologies with increasing acumen and sophistication. This is especially true with the Internet, which they exploit to create and disseminate propaganda, recruit new members, raise funds and other material resources, provide instruction on weapons and tactics, and plan operations. **Without a communications ability, terrorist groups cannot effectively organize operations, execute attacks, or spread their ideology. We and our partners will continue to target the communication nodes of our enemy.**"(Emphasis mine).

Further:

"The ability of terrorists to exploit the Internet and 24/7 worldwide media coverage allows them to bolster their prominence as well as feed a steady diet of radical ideology, twisted images, and conspiracy theories to potential recruits in all corners of the globe. Besides a global reach, these technologies allow terrorists to propagate their message quickly, often before an effective counter to terrorist messages can be coordinated and distributed. These are force multipliers for our enemy."

And more:

"Cyber safe-havens. The Internet provides an inexpensive, anonymous, geographically unbounded, and largely unregulated virtual haven for terrorists. Our enemies use the Internet to develop and disseminate propaganda, recruit new members, raise and transfer funds, train members on weapons use and tactics, and plan operations... **We will seek ultimately to deny the Internet to the terrorists** as an effective safe-haven for their propaganda, proselytizing, recruitment, fund-raising, training, and operational planning." (Emphasis mine).

Let's focus on that passage again - "We will seek ultimately to deny the Internet to the terrorists" since the identity of terrorists is unknown – isn't the only way to deny the internet to terrorists to deny it to us all?

Since the writing of the first draft of this article the signs have become more brazen and harder to miss: At the November 6, 2007 Hearing of the **Subcommittee on Intelligence, Information Sharing and Terrorism Risk Assessment** (Committee on Homeland Security)

two witnesses wedged the conflation of articulate dissent and terrorism into the public record. Bruce Hoffman (formerly of the RAND Corporation) gave his earnest opinion that:

“The Internet, once seen as an engine of education and enlightenment, has instead become an immensely useful vehicle for terrorists with which to peddle their baseless propaganda and manifold conspiracy theories and summon their followers to violence.”

The implication here being that “manifold conspiracy theories” were the product of terrorist masterminds, seeking to summon their followers to violence, and not the questions and observations of concerned citizens.

Next up came Mr. Mark Weitzman (of the Simon Wiesenthal Center) who gave a PowerPoint presentation of websites which fuel terrorism, and among sites applauding the act as a victory for Islamism, he inserts Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth ([www.ae911truth.org](http://www.ae911truth.org)) – a non-partisan coalition of licensed and degree holding professionals who use their expertise to refute the official story of 9/11 and call for a new investigation. [9]

None of this should come as any surprise. Just like other PNAC objectives (written before 9/11) which the Bush admin began working towards in the immediate wake of 9/11 (such as the securing of the Central Asia gas pipeline and the invasion of Iraq), control of the internet was on the table as an objective from day one. Right there, in their defining document is a call for control over the "International Commons" of the internet. This is hardly surprising - how could they achieve "Total Spectrum Dominance" without it?

It is my belief that the freedom we currently have to spread information globally, by-passing the main stream media, will be short lived; a lot of money and a lot of power play has been spent on shaping a main stream media that is compliant and obedient to the corporations, banks and governments who represent them, too much to expect they will sit there while the internet undoes all their hard work. Through the internet we can challenge the propaganda we are fed through newspapers and television news; the people have never had such power before and it is inconceivable it will be allowed to go on forever, especially after it has been so effective in spreading genuine information about the attacks of 9/11 and in mobilising a world wide push towards truth and justice.

The document quoted above stretches desperately to paint a picture where the internet is a vital tool for terrorists; where “conspiracy theorists” (the derogatory term for people challenging the government’s version of events of a particular situation) are a primary cause of terrorism and it claims that a goal of the “War on Terror” must be to control the internet.

Could it be that it is laying the groundwork for a future false flag attack which will be presented as having been reliant on terrorist access to the internet? That they could then justify new controls which will wrest net-freedom from the masses and send the world back to the day where the beginning and end of world events was how the main stream media told us it went?

Call me a “conspiracy theorist” if you like, but I believe so.

We have seen, from the public reaction to 9/11, that what the public will and won’t accept can be changed in the course of a day, if the events of that day cause significant fear and hysteria. All it would take would be to enact a terror attack which was reliant in its planning stage on the internet, perhaps throw in that the perpetrators were radicalised by conspiracy theorists - and bobs your uncle – perfect context in which to disarm and demonise those who are exposing their lies. Throw in Iranian nationality and a nuclear flavour to the proceedings and we have a whole line of birds arranged neatly for the stone to be thrown.

To be sure, this conclusion is wholly hypothetical, but the facts preceding it are not – we are seeing a very real propaganda operation against conspiracy theories, against descent. While it may seem like a wild leap to make I don’t believe it is irrational to suggest this is going somewhere. They need the internet gone; it is hampering their ability to act with impunity. While in the past they could rely on a pliant media to tell their truth, with the internet people are starting to put the pieces together and they don’t like it.

Let's use this tool while we still have it. There has never been a more effective method of global campaigning, information sharing, activism and dissent. And it scares them. Our task is huge and our time is slipping away. In this war the keyboard is mightier than the white phosphorus. Let's take to arms.

- [1] <http://technology.guardian.co.uk/weekly/story/0,16376,1585288,00.html>
- [2] [http://news.com.com/U.S.+to+retain+control+of+Internet+domain+names/2100-1028\\_3-5770937.html](http://news.com.com/U.S.+to+retain+control+of+Internet+domain+names/2100-1028_3-5770937.html)
- [3] [http://worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE\\_ID=42982](http://worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=42982)
- [4] [http://web.amnesty.org/web/content.nsf/pages/gbr\\_china\\_internet](http://web.amnesty.org/web/content.nsf/pages/gbr_china_internet)
- [5] [http://www.privacyinternational.org/article.shtml?cmd\[347\]=x-347-61390&als\[theme\]=Silenced%20Report](http://www.privacyinternational.org/article.shtml?cmd[347]=x-347-61390&als[theme]=Silenced%20Report)
- [6] <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,501051010-1112920,00.html>
- [7] <http://news.findlaw.com/nytimes/docs/google/gonzgoog11806m.html>
- [8] <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nsct/2006/sectionV.html>
- [9] <http://www.journalof911studies.com/letters/f/LettertoJaneHarmanUSCongress.pdf>

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