Google/Multi-National Corporations, International Surveillance, and Human Rights

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Abstract

The many news reports on cyber security, identity theft, Wikileaks, and NSA intelligence gathering programs over the past few years have shown the international community that the World Wide Web is anything but a safe place to store sensitive information, or any information for that matter. This study will examine how closely multi-national corporations in the information technology sector, such as Google, are involved with national governments on these issues. The study will analyze events in the U.S. and China and attempt to uncover whether or not these have directly infringed upon peoples’ basic human rights.

China’s “Golden Shield Project”
✧ “The Great Firewall of China”
✧ Chinese Government's internet censorship and surveillance program.
✧ Initiated, developed, and operated by the Ministry of Public Security (MPS)
✧ Essentially blocks Chinese residents from accessing popular websites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube.
✧ Jeopardizes citizens’ right to privacy and freedom of expression.

Cisco Accusations
✧ Aggressively sought contracts to provide substantial assistance, helping the Chinese implement the “Golden Shield Project”.
✧ Cisco employees themselves customized or trained others to customize the equipment they sold to China to meet unique goals.
✧ Cisco knew the GSP would be used to commit human rights violations.

NSA’s “PRISM” Project
✧ Tool used by the National Security Agency (NSA) to collect private electronic data belonging to users of major internet services like Gmail, Facebook, Outlook, and others.
✧ Post 9/11 electronic surveillance efforts as a result of the Patriot Act enacted by President Bush in 2001 and FISA (Foreign Intelligence Services Act).
✧ There are few technical details about how “PRISM” operates, and because of the fact that the FISA court operates in secret, critics are concerned about the extent of the program and whether it violates the constitutional rights of US citizens.

References