

Leftist Bias Of Right-Wing Bloggers

Elliot Temple has **detected** some crude anti-capitalist assumptions, normally associated with the left, in much of the recent right-wing criticism of Google's deference to the Chinese government.

Sat, 01/28/2006 - 11:53 | [digg](#) | [del.icio.us](#) | [permalink](#)

Ah, yes, the evil talk. Isn't

Ah, yes, the evil talk. Isn't it just so clear who the evil is in this saga? Is it any wonder that when a corporation is trying to do business under the rules of the Big Brother, who the evil really is? It is the Party, not Google. Google is playing the game. That may be a mistake, but not evil. Google's motto is "do not be evil" not "fight the evil". *We* must fight the evil, but not with Google, the corporate; but with Google, the search engine.

by Babak on Sat, 01/28/2006 - 19:56 | [reply](#)

Who is Big Brother?

So Google isn't evil, they're just following the rules of Big Brother. And Google doesn't have to fight evil, only 'we' have to fight evil. But who is Big Brother, and who is 'we'?

That Chinese official who told Google what to do, is he Big Brother? No. He's just someone following the rules of Big Brother. So is his boss. And his boss. So you say it's not their job to fight. And his boss, and so on up to the President. There is no Hitler or Stalin at the top in China, there's no one who can give the order to stop, and no one whose job is to fight.

On the other hand, who is 'we', who you say do have to fight? Readers of this blog? All good people? Wouldn't that include Google executives? And Chinese officials?

By the way, I agree with the post they linked to. I'm asking these questions seriously, not rhetorically.

by a reader on Sat, 01/28/2006 - 22:31 | [reply](#)

Re: Who is Big Brother?

FWIW I think your questions are good, and that questioning

whether Google did something wrong is perfectly legitimate.

I don't have a full answer, but I have some pieces:

It is OK for Google to trade with China in general. This is not like selling them weapons. They could even use Google already if they wanted.

What is worrisome to me is that Google is doing some of the enforcement of censorship for China. Note: I'm not sure how much work Google is really doing for China in this way, because they must already have code to censor results (they do it for rare things in other countries I've read). If the code is already there, turning it on may have been trivial. Still, lending the Chinese access to some of the power of Google's code matters (China is worse at writing code. Free people make better creative products.)

If Google wanted to fight China, I'd cheer for them, but I don't see any requirement that they do. They are making the world better just by providing search. In fact, they help enable the lives of other people who do want to fight against China. (To clarify what I mean, grocery stores also count as helping enable our China-fighters.)

Something we don't know is how committed Google is to working with China, or how ready to pull out if China starts demanding more things. When I try to imagine myself in charge of Google, I would not be very scared to work with China as long as stopping was a good option (if China demands more, or the original stuff turns out more problematic than expected). By trying it, Google can learn more about whether this is good to do. On the other hand, if it was hard to stop, or I feared I'd lose control of the company to people who Don't Get It soon (including if I happened to die and the next people in line were dumb), I'd be much more inclined to stay away.

-- Elliot Temple

Now Blogging Again

by [Elliot Temple](#) on Sun, 01/29/2006 - 01:43 | [reply](#)