

I Used to Work for Google. I Am a Conscientious Objector

American companies continue to build surveillance tools that are used to violate human rights. Workers who refuse to comply deserve protections.

“We can forgive your politics and focus on your technical contributions as long as you don’t do something unforgivable, like speaking to the press.”

This was the parting advice given to me during my exit interview from Google after spending a month internally arguing, [resignation letter](#) in hand, for the company to clarify its [ethical red lines](#) around [Project Dragonfly](#), the effort to modify Search to meet the censorship and surveillance demands of the Chinese Communist Party.

When a prototype circulated internally of a system that would ostensibly allow the Chinese government to [surveil Chinese users’ queries](#) by their phone numbers, Google executives argued that it was within existing norms. Governments, after all, make law enforcement demands of the company all the time...

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