



## EU Court Invents “Right” to be Forgotten, Orders Google to Obey

The European “Court of Justice,” the European Union’s highest judicial body, ruled this week that individuals have a “right to be forgotten” and that search engines such as Google must comply with requests to remove links. Analysts were divided on the ruling, with some noting that it raises major concerns about the right to free speech and freedom of information, while others celebrated the purported extension of the right to privacy. The dubious court’s ruling also advances the [long-time globalist goal of transnational regulation of the Internet](#).



The case that ultimately sparked the controversial decision surrounds a Spaniard, Mario Costeja Gonzalez, who wanted search engines to “forget” a 15-year-old newspaper article on his financial problems. Spanish courts referred the request to the Luxembourg-based supranational court. The European outfit agreed with Costeja, claiming Internet search engines have an obligation to ensure that vaguely defined “inadequate, irrelevant or no longer relevant” data is not available to the public.

Based on the ruling, only cases of “significant public interest” are exempt. Experts said the decision would potentially open the floodgates for individuals across the bloc who would rather the world not know something about them — somewhat similar, perhaps, to the infamous “memory hole” used in Orwell’s *1984* to alter history in a way suitable to the wishes of the ruling class. Under the EU court ruling, though, even private citizens will have the government-backed ability to demand that search engines flush inconvenient truths down the memory hole.

Google had argued that the responsibility for such information should remain with the creators or publishers. After all, search engines merely provide access to the data posted by other sources, not the information itself. People already have the right to challenge libelous information and force publishers to take it down. The Internet giant and others involved in the case, though, warned that the implications of holding search engines responsible for the process would be massive — with the financial costs impossible to calculate.

Before the judges’ decision was announced, an opinion issued last year by an advisor to the EU court highlighted the threat to free speech such a scheme would involve. In a statement after the ruling, Google spokesman Al Verney referred to that warning. “We are very surprised that [the ruling] differs so dramatically from the advocate general’s opinion and the warnings and consequences that he spelled out,” Verney said, calling it “disappointing” for search engines and online publishers. “We now need to take time to analyze the implications.”

Outside critics were blunter in their condemnation of the decision, reacting with cries of censorship and book burning. “This is akin to marching into a library and forcing it to pulp books,” Index on Censorship



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on May 15, 2014

chief executive Jodie Ginsberg was quoted as saying in media reports. “Although the ruling is intended for private individuals, it opens the door to anyone who wants to whitewash their personal history.”

“The court’s decision is a retrograde move that misunderstands the role and responsibility of search engines and the wider internet,” she was [quoted as saying](#) by the U.K. *Independent*. “It should send chills down the spine of everyone in the European Union who believes in the crucial importance of free expression and freedom of information.”

Another major concern surrounding the ruling is the [usurpation of power by self-styled international “authorities”](#) — in this case the EU and its so-called court. The legitimacy of the dubious transnational outfit, which in 2001 purported to allow bans on criticism of the EU, remains in question — along with the legitimacy of the entire Leviathan being foisted on the peoples of Europe largely against their will. Most of the Brussels-based regime now in the final stages of smashing national sovereignty and self-government has been [built without the consent of the peoples of the continent](#).

In the latest case, Google argued that as a U.S.-based company, it should not have to comply with foreign demands. The court disagreed; saying the firm markets its services in Spain. The ruling, then, advances two trends that have become increasingly alarming to observers: [regulation of the Internet by government](#); and even more alarming, perhaps, the [plot to impose global and regional “governance” on the Web by unaccountable entities](#) including the EU, the United Nations, and similar outfits.

Of course, Google itself has also become an [increasingly controversial outfit](#). “We know where you are. We know where you’ve been,” former CEO Eric Schmidt boasted. “We can more or less know what you’re thinking about.” Especially troubling to critics are the search engine giant’s broad ties with U.S. intelligence agencies — in particular the [Central Intelligence Agency and the recently exposed National Security Agency](#), which has been lawlessly violating the Fourth Amendment-protected privacy rights of hundreds of millions of Americans.

Constitutional attorney and author John W. Whitehead, president of The Rutherford Institute, recently highlighted the dangers posed by that unholy alliance. “What Google’s vast acquisition and analysis of information indicates is that we are entering what some have called an age of infopolitics, in which the human person is broken down into data sets to be collated and analyzed, and used for a variety of purposes, including marketing, propaganda, and the squelching of dissent,” he [wrote](#).

While the EU ruling may at first glance seem to be a positive development when it comes to personal privacy, the broader implications surrounding free speech and Internet freedom should not be overlooked.

*Photo of The Towers at the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg*

*Alex Newman, a foreign correspondent for The New American, is currently based in Europe. He can be reached at [anewman@thenewamerican.com](mailto:anewman@thenewamerican.com). Follow him on Twitter [@ALEXNEWMAN\\_JOU](#).*

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