Press Release

7 October 2004

FBI Seizes IMC Servers in the UK

US authorities issued a federal order to Rackspace's office in the US ordering them to provide Indymedia's hardware located in London to the requesting agency. Rackspace is one of Indymedia's web hosting providers with offices in the US and London. Rackspace complied, without first notifying Indymedia, and turned over Indymedia's server in the UK. This affects some 20+ Indymedia sites worldwide.

Since the subpoena was issued to Rackspace and not to Indymedia, the reasons for this action are still unknown to Indymedia. Talking to Indymedia volunteers, Rackspace stated that "they cannot provide Indymedia with any information regarding the order." ISPs have received gag orders in similar situations which prevent them from updating the concerned parties on what is happening.

It is unclear to Indymedia how and why a server that is outside the US jurisdiction can be seized by US authorities.

At the same time a second server was taken down at Rackspace which provided streaming radio to several radio stations, BLAG (linux distro), and a handful of miscellanous things.

The last few months have seen numerous attacks on independent media by the US Federal Government. In August the Secret Service used a subpoena in an attempt to disrupt the NYC IMC before the RNC by trying to get IP logs from an ISP in the US and the Netherlands. Last month the FCC shut down community radio stations around the US. Two weeks ago the FBI requested that Indymedia takes down a post on the Nantes IMC that had a photo of some undercover Swiss police and IMC volunteers in Seattle were visited by the FBI on the same issue. On the other hand, Indymedia and other independent media organisations were successfull with their victories for example against Diebold and the Patriot Act. Today however, the US authorities shut down IMCs around the world.

The list of affected local media collectives includes Ambazonia, Uruguay, Andorra, Poland, Western Massachusetts, Nice, Nantes, Lilles, Marseille (all France), Euskal Herria (Basque Country), Liege, East and West Vlaanderen, Antwerpen (all Belgium), Belgrade, Portugal, Prague, Galiza, Italy, Brazil, UK, part of the Germany site, and the global Indymedia Radio site.

www.indymedia.org