



U.S.-CHINA ECONOMIC AND SECURITY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Hearing on *Access to Information and Media Control in the People's Republic of China*

**Opening Statement of Commissioner Jeffrey Fiedler
June 18, 2008
Washington, DC**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to second the Chairman's welcome to all of those attending our proceedings today, as well as to those members of Congress who will testify at today's hearing: (*Congressional responses still pending*).

Recent developments in China raise serious concern about the government's continuing efforts to control information available to its citizens. In the lead-up to this year's Olympics, the Chinese government has made repeated promises of greater press and internet freedom, but there are many discouraging signs that these promises are not being fulfilled. The Chinese government also continues to impede the efforts of U.S.-sponsored news agencies, such as those acting under the sponsorship of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, to bring more open and objective sources of information to the Chinese public.

Furthermore, the displays of angry, defensive Chinese nationalism on display in the wake of international criticisms of the government's policies in Tibet serve to reveal the negative effects produced by the Chinese government's pervasive nationalist propaganda directed at its own people. Denied broader sources of information from which to form more objective views, Chinese citizens may develop a distorted view of the world that feeds hostility towards the United States and other countries.

In order to keep its own people insulated from news that it does not like, the government has erected a pervasive information control system, which goes far beyond the traditional print and broadcast media. Chinese government censorship has kept pace with rapidly changing modern technology, and the government has established an elaborate internet control regime intended to filter out information on sensitive topics, as well as to inhibit the use of the internet as a tool for developing institutions of civil society. American companies have played a prominent role in facilitating the government's construction of this internet control regime. We hope that our discussions here today will contribute to the public debate as to whether or not further U.S. government action is required to regulate the participation of U.S. companies in the censorship regimes of foreign governments.

With that, I'll turn the floor over to our first witness... (*if no members of Congress appear, the first witness will be Dr. Randolph Kluver*).