

Yahoo asks for China suit dismissal

by UPI

SAN FRANCISCO - Yahoo has asked a California court to dismiss a lawsuit that claims the company's Chinese subsidiary supported torture and abuse of pro-democracy writers. The Internet giant said in court papers filed in U.S. District Court for Northern California that it had no choice but to comply with the Chinese government's lawful request for personal information about the writers, The Washington Post reported Tuesday. Yahoo said in the filing that it cannot "be held liable for the independent acts of the (Chinese government) just because a former Yahoo subsidiary in China obeyed a lawful government request for the collection of evidence relevant to a pending investigation," the Wall Street Journal reported. The suit was filed by The World Organization for Human Rights USA on behalf of two Chinese writers who used Yahoo's e-mail service to distribute their writings, the Post said. Shi Tao and Wang Xiaoning are serving 10-year prison sentences in China. Tao, a reporter and editor at Contemporary Business News in China, was charged in November 2004 with publishing a document considered secret by the Chinese government. He pleaded guilty. Xiaoning, who writes and edits for pro-democracy publications, was convicted in 2002 of "incitement to subvert state power." The lawsuit claims both men have been abused and tortured in custody.

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