

Proton Mail Says It's "Politically Neutral" While Praising Republican Party

Nikita Mazurov · 6-7 minutes · 1/28/2025

Proton, the company behind the eponymous email provider Proton Mail, has won itself a loyal fanbase of dissidents, investigative journalists, and others skeptical of the prying eyes of government or Big Tech. Headquartered in Switzerland, the service describes itself as "a neutral and safe haven for your personal data, committed to defending your freedom."

So it came as a surprise last month when Proton CEO Andy Yen praised the Republican Party in a [post on X](#), declaring that "10 years ago, Republicans were the party of big business and Dems stood for the little guys, but today the tables have completely turned." When the tweet went [viral](#), Proton's official Reddit account posted a [now-deleted comment](#) stating that "Until corporate Dems are thrown out, the reality is that Republicans remain more likely to tackle Big Tech abuses."

Within hours, Proton deleted its response across social media accounts, [stating](#) that the post — which started with the words "Here is our official response" — was in fact "removed because it was not actually an official statement." The reply went on to say: "Our policy is that official accounts cannot be used to express personal political opinions. If it happens by mistake, we correct it as soon as we notice it."

[–] **Proton_Team** - Proton Team Admin · -33 points 57 minutes ago

Here is our official response, also available on the Mastodon post in the screenshot:

Corporate capture of Dems is real. In 2022, we campaigned extensively in the US for anti-trust legislation.

Two bills were ready, with bipartisan support. Chuck Schumer (who coincidentally has two daughters working as big tech lobbyists) refused to bring the bills for a vote.

At a 2024 event covering antitrust remedies, out of all the invited senators, just a single one showed up - JD Vance.

By working on the front lines of many policy issues, we have seen the shift between Dems and Republicans over the past decade first hand.

Dems had a choice between the progressive wing (Bernie Sanders, etc), versus corporate Dems, but in the end money won and constituents lost.

Until corporate Dems are thrown out, the reality is that Republicans remain more likely to tackle Big Tech abuses.

A screenshot of Proton's now-deleted official response to CEO Andy Yen's post in support of the Republican Party. Screenshot: Reddit

Yen further [claimed](#) that the post had been an "internal miscommunication," later [also writing](#) that Proton is "politically neutral."

He followed it up with a longer [statement](#) explaining that "while we may share facts and analysis, our policy going forward will be to share no opinions of a political nature. The line between facts, analysis, and opinions can be blurry at times, but we will seek to better clarify this over time through your feedback and input." Yen didn't specifically address whether the deleted post had constituted opinion or analysis.

In response to a request for comment, Proton reiterated the claim that it is a "politically neutral organization," then went on to state that "regardless of one's views about the wider Republican platform, if you agree that action is needed on antitrust then the appointment of Gail Slater is a positive thing," referring to President Donald Trump's choice to head the Justice Department's antitrust division. Proton further stated that "Big Tech CEOs are tripping over themselves to kiss the ring precisely because Trump represents an unprecedented challenge to their monopolistic dominance."

When Governments Ask for Data

Yen has repeatedly described Proton as being a “[privacy-first](#)” company, and its homepage touts that “With Proton, your data belongs to you, not tech companies, governments, or hackers.” However, Proton has in the past revealed user information to authorities. For instance, Proton [previously](#) handed over an IP address at the request of French authorities made via Europol to Swiss police. Yen wrote a Twitter [post](#) at the time, stating, “Proton must comply with Swiss law. As soon as a crime is committed, privacy protections can be suspended and we’re required by Swiss law to answer requests from Swiss authorities.”

Proton’s [information for law enforcement](#) page states that it requires a copy of a “police report or court order,” albeit either a foreign or domestic one. For its part, Proton told The Intercept that “Proton does not comply with US subpoenas, it doesn’t matter if it’s Biden or Trump in power.”

Andy Yen, co-founder of Proton Mail. Photo: Stuart Cahill/MediaNews Group/Boston Herald via Getty Images

While Proton [states](#) that it “cannot read any of your messages or hand them over to third parties,” the same [doesn’t apply](#) to email subjects; sender or recipient names and email addresses; the time a message was sent; or other information in the “header” section of email messages. Proton explicitly states that “if served with a valid Swiss court order, we do have the ability to turn over the subjects of your messages.”

Under Trump’s previous term, the Department of Justice sought to clandestinely [obtain](#) “non-content” communications records, including [phone](#) and email records, of [reporters at a variety of news outlets](#) such as CNN and the New York Times. While the subject of an email is considered “content,” non-content records include metadata such as the date and time a message was sent, as well as the sender and recipient of an email.

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The prior behavior of a Trump-led DOJ, coupled with the praise and efforts by tech CEOs to [curry favor](#) with the Trump camp, has raised the question of how amenable the industry will be to data requests from the incoming administration. It’s a particularly important question for the types of users who have flocked to Proton — the kind fearful of exposing sensitive sources or persecuted individuals to state surveillance. (The Intercept uses Proton Mail as its email provider.)

“Platforms inherently occupy a position of trust because we want them to have users’ backs when the government comes knocking for data,” said Andrew Crocker, the Electronic Frontier Foundation’s surveillance litigation director, which has published an annual “[Who Has Your Back?](#)” reports, which analyzed companies’ acquiescence to government requests for user data.

“It’s reasonable to worry that tech companies’ backbone for protecting users in this way might soften when they get too politically involved with any one administration,” Crocker said.