

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Maycock v. Cloudfare, Inc.

Maycock · No. 24-cv-07102-JD · Decided September 30, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of California quashed a subpoena issued under 28 U.S.C. § 1782 seeking identifying information for operators of the “Debunking Tamworth” website. The Court concluded that related disclosure proceedings were already pending in the United Kingdom and that U.K. courts were better positioned to resolve the parties’ disputes. The denial was without prejudice, and the case was closed because the plaintiff asserted no independent claim.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
DECIDED	September 30, 2025
DOCKET	24-cv-07102-JD
DISPOSITION	quashed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	After initially granting Maycock's application for discovery under 28 U.S.C. § 1782 and issuing a subpoena to Cloudfare, the court considered non-party John Doe's motion to quash the subpoena.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Abuse-of-discretion framework governing a district court's discretionary decision whether to provide assistance under 28 U.S.C. § 1782.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unpublished district court order; precedential status not stated
PARTIES	Daniel Lee Maycock v. Cloudfare, Inc.

TOPICS

- discovery dispute
- foreign affairs
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

- Civil procedure
- International judicial assistance
- Foreign affairs

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court should exercise its discretionary authority under 28 U.S.C. § 1782 to enforce a subpoena seeking identification of the operators of a website for use in foreign proceedings.
2. Whether the previously issued § 1782 subpoena should be quashed in light of the multiple related proceedings and the potential conflict with United Kingdom proof-gathering restrictions and policies.
3. Whether non-party John Doe was entitled to attorney's fees or to submit new evidence.

HOLDINGS

1. Section 1782 authorizes, but does not require, a federal district court to provide judicial assistance in connection with foreign or international proceedings.
2. The court declined to exercise its discretionary authority under § 1782 and quashed the previously issued subpoena.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“§ 1782(a) authorizes, but does not require, a federal district court to provide judicial assistance to foreign or international tribunals or to ‘interested person[s]’ in proceedings abroad.” (at 2)

“With the benefit of a more developed record, it has become clear that the Court ought not exercise its broad discretion to order discovery under 28 U.S.C. § 1782. The previously issued subpoena, Dkt. No. 16, is quashed.” (at 3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Daniel Lee Maycock, a British citizen and former Deputy Mayor of Tamworth, alleged that the website "Debunking Tamworth" published defamatory material about him. He sought identifying information for the website's operators from Cloudflare, a U.S.-based entity, to support contemplated defamation proceedings in England. After the subpoena issued, an internet journalist proceeding as John Doe moved to quash it to protect his identity. The record showed that multiple related disclosure applications were already pending under at least five United Kingdom case numbers.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Maycock sought identifying information from Cloudflare concerning the operators of a website allegedly defaming him, intending to pursue defamation proceedings in England. At the joint request of Maycock and Cloudflare, the court granted the § 1782 application and issued a subpoena. Before Cloudflare responded, John Doe, an internet journalist associated with the website, moved to quash and sought to preserve his anonymity. The court quashed the subpoena, denied Doe's requests for attorney's fees and to submit new evidence, and closed the case while allowing a renewed § 1782 request without prejudice.

DISPOSITION

quashed

CASES CITED

- Intel Corp. v. Advanced Micro Devices, Inc., 542 U.S. 241, 247 (2004)
- Intel Corp. v. Advanced Micro Devices, Inc., 542 U.S. 241, 265 (2004)

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