

Gag Free Speech on the Internet



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Obama Official: Gag Free Speech on the Internet



Kyle Smith

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[When it comes to the First Amendment, Team Obama believes in Global Chilling.](#)

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[Cass Sunstein](#), a Harvard Law professor who has been appointed to a shadowy post that will grant him powers that are merely mind-boggling, explicitly supports using the courts to impose a "chilling effect" on speech that might hurt someone's feelings. He thinks that the bloggers have been rampaging out of control and that new laws need to be written to corral them.

Advance copies of Sunstein's new book, "On Rumors: How Falsehoods Spread, Why We Believe Them, What Can Be Done," have gone out to reviewers ahead of its September publication date, but considering the prominence with which Sunstein is about to be endowed, his worrying views are fair game now. Sunstein is [President Obama](#)'s choice to head the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. It's the bland titles that should scare you the most.

"Although obscure," reported the [Wall Street Journal](#), "the post wields outsize power. It oversees regulations throughout the government, from the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Obama aides have said the job will be crucial as the new administration overhauls financial-services regulations, attempts to pass universal health care and tries to forge a new approach to controlling emissions of greenhouse gases."

Sunstein was appointed, no doubt, off the success of "Nudge," his previous book, which suggests that government ought to gently force people to be better human beings.

Czar is too mild a world for what Sunstein is about to become. How about "regulator in chief"? How about "lawgiver"? He is Obama's Obama.

In "On Rumors," Sunstein reviews how views get cemented in one camp even when people are presented with persuasive evidence to the contrary. He worries that we are headed for a future in which "people's beliefs are a product of social networks working as echo chambers in which false rumors spread like wildfire." That future, though, is already here, according to Sunstein. "We hardly need to imagine a world, however, in which people and institutions are being harmed by the rapid spread of damaging falsehoods via the Internet," he writes. "We live in that world. What might be done to reduce the harm?"

Sunstein questions the current libel standard - which requires proving "actual malice" against those who write about public figures, including celebrities. Mere "negligence" isn't libelous, but Sunstein wonders, "Is it so important to provide breathing space for damaging falsehoods about entertainers?" Celeb rags, get ready to hire more lawyers.

Sunstein also believes that - whether you're a blogger, The New York Times or a Web hosting service - you should be held responsible even for *what your commenters say*. Currently you're immune under section 230 of the Communications Decency Act. "Reasonable people," he says, "might object that this is not the right rule," though he admits that imposing liability for commenters on service providers would be "a considerable burden."

But who cares about a burden when insults are being bandied about? "A 'chilling effect' on those who would spread destructive falsehoods can be an excellent idea," he says.

"As we have seen," Sunstein writes, having shown us no such thing, "falsehoods can undermine democracy itself." What Sunstein means by that sentence is pretty clear: He doesn't like so-called false rumors about his longtime University of Chicago friend and colleague, [Barack Obama](#).

He alludes on page 3 (and on page 13, and 14, and 45, and 54 - the book is only 87 pages) to the supposedly insidious lie that "Barack Obama pals around with terrorists." Since Sunstein intends to impose his Big Chill on such talk, I'd better get this in while I can. The "rumor," i.e., "fact," about the palsy-walsiness of Obama and unrepentant terrorist Bill Ayers (Ayers referred to Obama as a "family friend" in a memoir) did not "undermine democracy," i.e., prevent Obama's election. The facts got out, voters weighed them and ruled that they weren't disqualifying.

Sunstein calls for a "notice and take down" law that would require bloggers and service providers to "take down falsehoods upon notice," even those made by commenters - but without apparent penalty.

Consider how well this nudge would work. You blog about Obama-Ayers. You get a letter claiming that your facts are wrong so you should remove your post. You refuse. If, after a court proceeding proves simply that you are wrong (but not that you committed libel, which when a public figure is the target is almost impossible), you lose, the penalty is . . . you must take down your post.

How long would it take for a court to sort out the truth? Sasha and Malia will be running for president by then. Nobody will care anymore. But it will give politicians the ability to tie up their online critics in court.

Sunstein, trying to fair, argues that libel awards should be capped at \$15,000, or at least limited for anyone demonstrating financial hardship. But \$15K is the limit you'd pay to your opponent. The legal bill is the scary part, and the reason bloggers already have plenty of reason to be careful about what they say, even if they don't much fear a libel conviction.

Sunstein dreams of an impossibly virtuous America: "We could also imagine a future in which those who spread false rumors are categorized as such, discounted and marginalized . . . people would approach rumors skeptically even they provide comfort and fit their own biases." But if his chilling wind doesn't work, Sunstein may try to make good on the implicit threat that runs through his book: that he would redefine libel as the spread of false information and hold everyone up the ladder responsible.

If this happened, the blogosphere would turn into Pluto overnight. Comments sections would slam shut. Every writer would work on a leash shorter than a shoelace.

Sunstein is an enemy to every news organization and blogger. We should return the favor and declare war on him.

Kyle.Smith@nypost.com

Read more:

http://www.nypost.com/p/news/opinion/opedcolumnists/item_jWqYGgWq425vqy5j59nw8K/1#ixzz0fTRtiRu

The European approach to democracy promotion in post-communist countries" - Speech by EU Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner

Summary: "The European approach to democracy promotion in post-communist countries" - Speech by EU Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner (19 January 2006: Vienna)

Speech by Benita Ferrero-Waldner, European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, "The European approach to democracy promotion in post-communist countries", International Conference, Institute for Human Sciences, Vienna

Dear Professor Michalski,
Mr Chairman, Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for this invitation to speak to you today. I see that the issues which have arisen since I last spoke to you a year ago are well reflected in your programme - democratisation and energy markets; democratisation and Islam. The challenges facing democracy seem to become more complex as time goes by.

Yet, thanks to the dedication of international policy-makers and many non-governmental enthusiasts, the tide of democracy keeps moving in the right direction, despite all the ups and downs witnessed in 2006. We should not underestimate the force for change encompassed by people power.

Last year I gave you an overview of the EU's approach to democracy promotion. I mentioned the 3 key principles of the **EU's approach**:

- 1) We recognise that the practice of **democracy can look very different from one country to the next**, and political institutions must match local conditions. There is no one-size-fits-all solution to democracy promotion.
- 2) We know we **need long term commitment** and patience. Democracy is not instant coffee - it takes time to build new institutions and widespread trust in them.
- 3) And perhaps most importantly, we understand that democracy can **never be imposed from outside**: genuine democratic transition must always come from within. And this takes time and can be accompanied by temporary setbacks.

Today I would like to talk about **three very recent developments** in the EU's democracy promotion armoury which reflect those principles and which will set the scene for EU policy making in the next few years.

- An enhanced European Neighbourhood Policy
- A strategy for Central Asia; and
- A new financial instrument at our disposal.

1) First, the **European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)**. ENP is the EU's policy for promoting prosperity, democracy and security in its immediate neighbourhood, to the East and to the South. ENP was set up to encourage the countries in this region to undertake far-reaching reform by offering them the incentive of a closer relationship with the EU. This could mean integration into the EU's single market, and greater financial benefits.

ENP operates through **Action Plans**, tailor-made for each country, which detail the incentives on offer from the EU and the policy areas where our partners intend to make progress: rule of law, democracy, human rights, as well as market-oriented economic reforms.

Although the first two years of implementing this policy showed some good results, it became clear to me that the policy wasn't living up to its full potential. Why? Because most of the benefits we were offering were too long-term to push our partners to make the short term political sacrifices needed for real reforms. We realised that benefits were needed of the kind which make a difference to people directly and immediately, in exchange for faster and better reforms.

So in December the Commission launched an **enhanced European Neighbourhood Policy**. It has its own financing instrument with an overall budget of **€12 billion for 2007-13**, including **€700 mill.** "seed money" for a new **Neighbourhood Investment Fund** providing grant support for infrastructure and other big-scale operations.

The enhanced ENP concentrates on key areas of mutual interest. We want to have closer people to people contacts, for example through a new scholarship programme for young people and improved visa policies. We want to give ENP a regional dimension also to the East - something comparable to the Barcelona process for the South. This will prepare us for building a "neighbourhood economic community" between the EU and our partner countries, East and South.

Perhaps of most interest in the context of this conference is how ENP **supports political reform**. We advise on our experience of democratisation and governance reforms, and we help build effective administrations and root out corruption and fraud.

The enhanced ENP instrument includes a **new Governance Facility worth €300 million**, which will reward those countries who make most progress in governance reform. In 2006, Morocco and Jordan already benefited from a similar reward - we hope that this year some of our Eastern neighbours will also be eligible.

A very successful example in the ENP's Eastern part is **Ukraine**. The EU-Ukraine Action Plan, adopted in early 2005 in the aftermath of the Orange Revolution, has proven to be a fundamental tool in promoting and consolidating political and democratic reform and respect for human rights in the country. The EU had indicated at the time that, provided the main political elements of the Action Plan were fulfilled, we would be ready to further strengthen our relations with Ukraine through a "new enhanced agreement". Following the democratic parliamentary elections of 2006, we are now on our way to launch negotiations this spring for a new, ambitious and comprehensive agreement - which I am confident will in turn contribute to further consolidating the democratic transition process within Ukraine.

On the other pole of democratic progress in this region stands **Belarus**, which continues to deserve our full attention. Last year's presidential elections were deemed as flawed by the OSCE and by the EU.

The local elections that took place on Sunday again showed a complete disregard for pluralistic democracy. The opposition was given no chance to compete fairly with State supported candidates and the voters were given no genuine choice. And opposition proponents, like Mr Milinkevich, winner of the European Parliament's Sacharov prize, are still often detained.

The people of Belarus are still deprived of independent information and of a democratic alternative. We therefore have to speak to them directly. For this reason, we made public our offer to the people of Belarus. Our message is that we are available for a closer relationship with Belarus within the framework of the ENP, and we are ready to make our assistance fully available to the Belarusian people, as soon as Belarus demonstrates its willingness to become a true democracy and to honour its commitments on respect for the rule of law and human rights.

Meanwhile, the EC is committed to continue supporting civil society and democratisation efforts. We will also seek to further develop ties between the people of Belarus and of the EU.

The other ENP countries in the East, **Moldova and the three Caucasus republics** are of course more democratic than Belarus. Unfortunately, there are limits to what can be achieved through political reforms there, too, as long as unresolved conflicts destabilize these countries. We need to address the challenge of the frozen conflicts in Moldova and the Southern Caucasus. In addition to the successful EU border management mission in Moldova, we therefore propose a greater EU presence in regional conflict resolution mechanisms. This could also mean participation in peace keeping efforts, for instance. More security and democratic reforms are interlinked and mutually beneficial.

2) This brings me to my second issue of the day, **Central Asia**. Some of you may remember that last year I pointed out that we urgently needed to define an approach to the countries of Central Asia. This region, which I know well since my time as Chairperson of the OSCE, has great political challenges for us, but also considerable economic and strategic potential. As you are well aware, it contains vast energy resources which are of increasing importance to a mineral-starved Europe. Thanks to enlargement and ENP, it is coming closer to our borders.

This part of the post-communist space still hosts a significant democracy deficit, and the values we hold dear are often violated. But we also see encouraging trends, like in Kyrgyzstan, where the people succeeded in their fight for democracy. And I also note Kazakhstan's efforts to assume the OSCE's chairmanship, which still requires progress on a number of democracy and human rights issues.

Because the EU needs to take a coherent and consistent approach to the region, we are in the process of developing a strategy for Central Asia - the first of its kind. In December the Commission and the Council Secretariat elaborated a policy paper setting out possible elements for such a strategy. Work continues now with the German Presidency.

The first and most important strand in the paper is the need to promote good governance, human rights and democratisation. Without these, security and modernisation will simply not be possible.

This is not an easy region in which to work, but it is one where we absolutely have to find solutions - or we remain stuck with the difficult dilemmas we face. The **key word for me is 'engagement'**. Without engagement we can not hope to influence the human rights and democracy situation, even in the most difficult countries. While other international actors like Russia and China are engaging in the region without paying much attention to these issues, for us it goes hand in hand and forms part of our overall agenda.

Our **focus therefore needs to be on good governance**, institutional and political reforms, and the rule of law. We should introduce structured human rights dialogues, and continue support for civil society and NGOs. We have to prioritise education and training, and support local democratisation efforts. Over the next six months, under German Presidency we will have a serious discussion about the nature and future of our policy in the region.

It is clear that we must tailor our policies to the different situations in each country. In Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan it is easier to work with civil society and fund democracy promotion projects. But in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan the situation is more difficult.

Yet in the long run nothing will be possible in Central Asia without the consolidation of stable, just and open societies. The political-, economic-, and social-governance deficits in combination with the poverty situation provides fertile ground for extremism.

Before turning to the third point of my speech, the new financial Instrument, I have to touch upon one country which is neither part of our Neighbourhood Policy nor of our Central Asia strategy. But of course, no discussion of democracy promotion in post-Communist countries could be complete without **some words about Russia**.

It is indeed no secret that we **have concerns** about the state of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Russia. The situation in Chechnya continues to worry us. I am therefore glad that after difficult discussions with the Russians we were able to agree on a special cooperation project for Chechnya, which hopefully will start in the near future.

The killing of Anna Politkovskaya - the 21st journalist killed in Russia since 2000 according to some NGOs - illustrates the pressures under which independent media at times have to operate. We will also continue to watch how the **new laws on NGOs** and anti-extremist activities affect the situation of NGOs and civil society as a whole.

We regularly take these matters up in our **political dialogue** with Russia and the **twice-yearly human rights consultations**. In addition, the stringent human rights commitments undertaken in the Council of Europe - which Russia has been chairing until recently - will be an important part of the common values we wish to see reflected in the **new EU-Russia agreement**, which we will start negotiating soon.

3) With this, let me turn to the third and final development I'd like to mention, our **new European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)**. Since the beginning of this year, the EU has this new legal instrument for our financing of democracy promotion and human rights activities, **worth more than €130 million** a year. Let me stress that this money comes in addition and complementary to the much vaster amounts available in our instruments for different geographical regions - with which we also pursue the improvement of good governance, democracy and the rule of law among other objectives.

But the EIDHR is **more specifically tailored** to the cause of human rights and democracy, and can be

used **more flexibly** to promote them. Also compared to its predecessor, the new EIDHR offers much more flexibility in the sorts of projects we can fund and the way we can respond to new situations. We will be able to act more quickly than in the past, and work with a broader array of actors.

We will also be able to act entirely independently of national governments in the partner countries, which was not always the case in the past. This will give us more freedom to work with those who are best placed to have an impact on the ground.

And we are now freer to **work with a wider range of actors**, including parliaments and political foundations, with whom we were prohibited from working in the past.

So as you can see, 2007 begins with the EU in an even stronger position to consolidate its role as a leading promoter of democracy around the world.

We intend to work towards greater cooperation with organisations such as the UN, the Council of Europe and the OSCE, which do such valuable work in this field, including in the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I hope this gives you a taste of the way EU democracy promotion activities have developed over the last year, and the direction we might take in the future.

Before closing though I'd like to pay tribute to the many democracy defenders, in this room and beyond, who are fighting on a daily basis for democratic freedom. It may at times seem as daunting a challenge as that of Sisyphus, but your individual contributions in this region and beyond are certainly helping to eventually fix the stone of democracy on top of the hill in all those countries.

Looking forward to a discussion I will end here - as Clement Attlee famously put it, "Democracy means government by discussion, but it is only effective if you can stop people talking"!

Source: http://www.europa-eu-un.org/articles/en/article_6708_en.htm



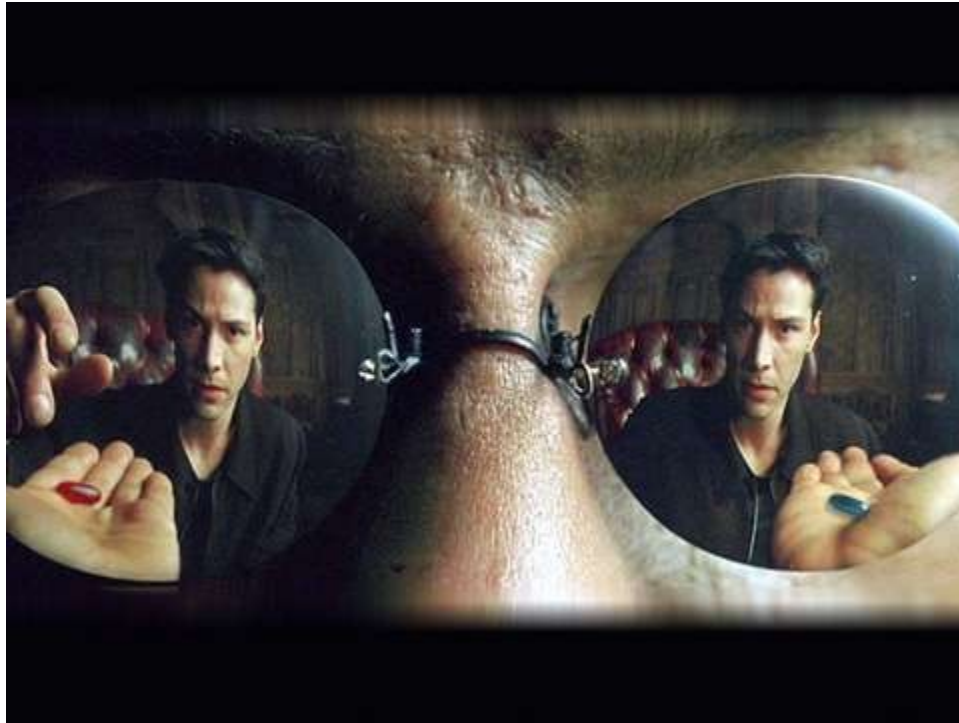
Get ready get angry flex your rights !

Check this video out, what is next?????



http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rSi_y83F0co

STILL LIVING IN THE MATRIX????????????????????????????????????



Gag the Internet because you may be able to realize the truth that is out there. Awaken from the Matrix. It is only typical that Big Brother, the ILLUMINISTS of this World would eventually use the terrorist smoke screen to keep all of us cattle asleep and under their control and create the New World Order

Chose which pill are you going to take. Will you continue living in the matrix as cattle asleep and under big brother's control or will you chose the right pill and awaken from the Illusions that they have created.



BIG BROTHER



**IS WATCHING
YOU**

Limiting Free Speech

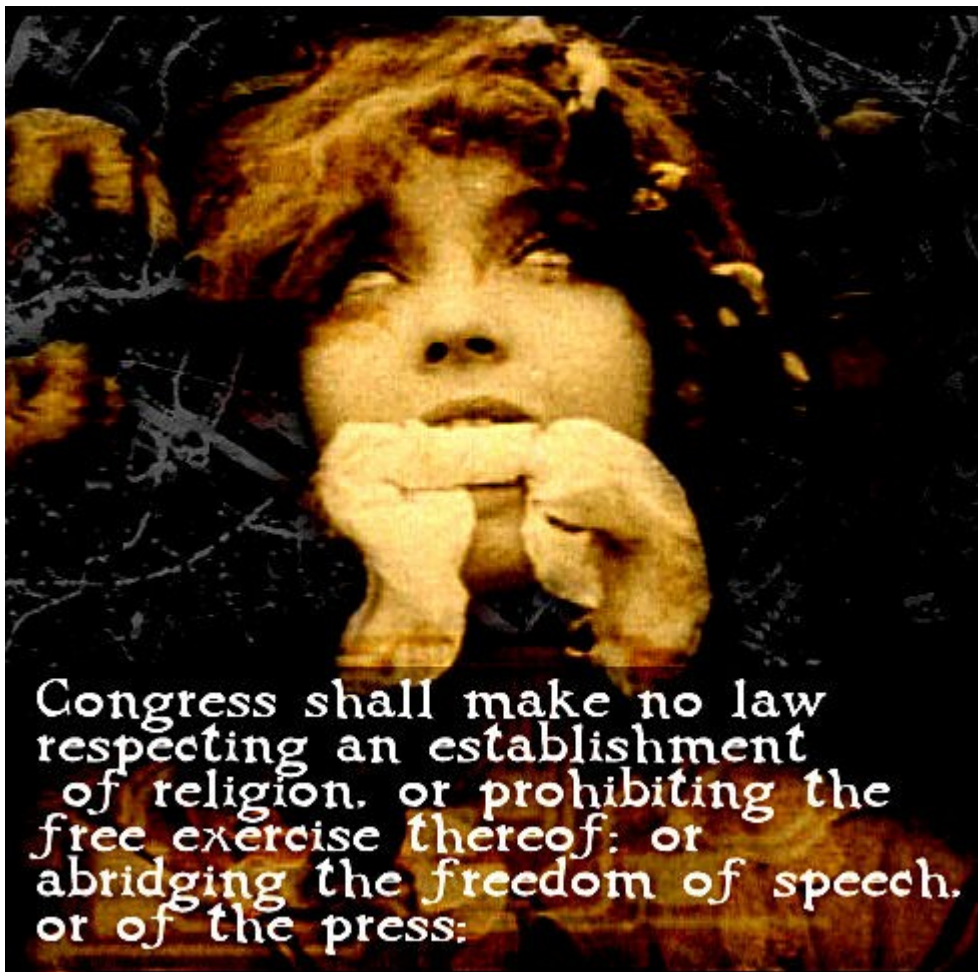


The main **justification for limiting free speech** is the possibility that speech violates others people's **rights**.



John Rawls

John Rawls reminded us that free speech should contribute to rational debate. The purpose of speech is to convince, to examine arguments, to revise one's opinions in the light of as much information as possible, to submit one's opinions to a critical public etc. Neither ridicule nor threats can advance such a vision of debate. Source: <http://filipspagnoli.wordpress.com/2008/07/24/limiting-free-speech-4-derogatory-speech/>



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"Don't you see an inconsistency, sire? You permit
free speech and then censor everything."

The Right to Freedom of Speech



The right to freedom of speech is recognised as a fundamental human right. However, this right must be used responsibly and there are certain exceptions.

Freedom of Speech Rights

Freedom of speech and expression are recognized under the European Convention of Human Rights as fundamental human rights. In Britain these rights can be found as early as 1215 in the Magna Carta.

Everyone has the right to freedom of speech and expression, and has the right to voice their opinions and to freely receive and give out information. Prior to the Human Rights Act, the freedom of expression was permitted as long as the law did not prevent it. But the Human Rights Act now guarantees under the law the rights to freedom of speech and expression.

The Fundamental Right

Freedom of speech and expression are extremely important rights; in Britain we have the right to express ourselves without persecution from others. This is not the case in all countries around the world. There are still countries where it is possible to be incarcerated and punished for expressing your own opinion if it goes against government thinking. The right to freedom of speech and expression is the building block of our society. Anyone has the right to express themselves freely without fear of punishment from the government or from other individuals.

Responsibility and Freedom of Speech

Freedom of speech and expression are not absolute rights; this means that there are exceptions to these fundamental rights. For example publishing material or making comments that are specifically designed to incite racial hatred can be deemed to be a hate crime. Anyone who is found committing this offence can be charged in a criminal court. Many people argue that publishing a person's opinion, even if it is offensive to others, is a right. However, if the material is intended to bring harm against others then that is an abuse of the victim's other civil and human rights.

Other Exceptions

There are other exceptions to this right and they do include restrictions on the grounds of national security. Other exceptions can include restrictions on the grounds of public safety, the protection of health and morals, and restrictions to prevent crime and disorder. The disclosure of information that has been received in confidence is another exception. The main exceptions to the rights of freedom of speech and expression are that the expressions do not endanger or harm others.

Rights in Action

Although no one wants to take away another person's right to freedom of speech it is wise to use this freedom responsibly. A recent freedom of expression controversy occurred when a Danish newspaper printed cartoons on the prophet Mohammed. The Muslim community deemed these cartoons to be offensive and irresponsible. Extreme Muslims went further by burning embassies and causing the deaths of others. The cultural editor of the Danish newspaper expressed regret over the consequences of the cartoons but would not apologise as they felt that had a right to publish the cartoons.

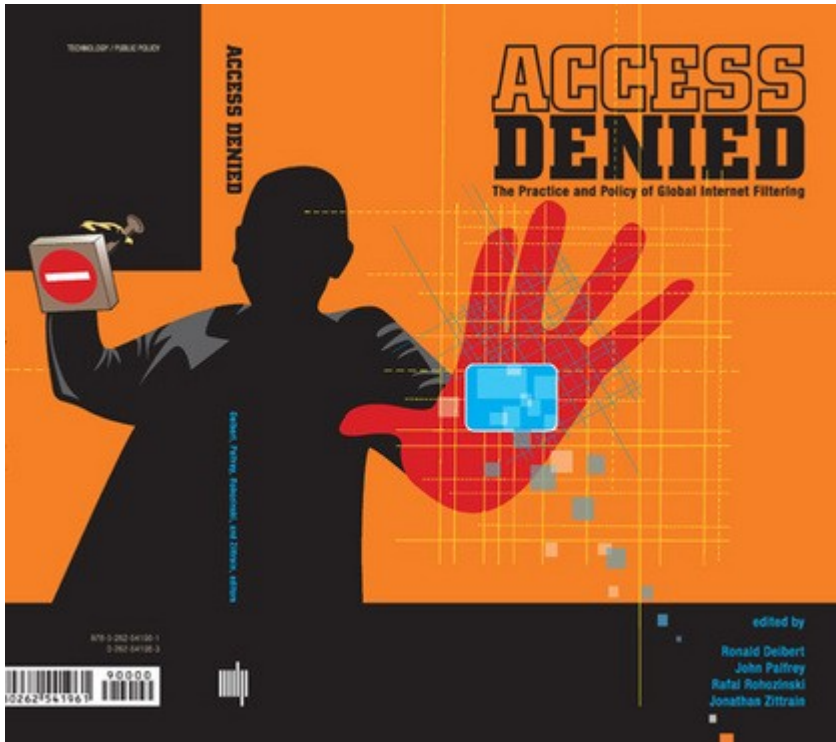
Responsible Use of Expression

The freedom to communicate is a right, as is the freedom to pass and receive information. If the Danish newspaper had been forbidden to print the cartoons it could be seen as censorship of the press. If the editor of the newspaper had not printed the cartoon that could have been viewed as self-censorship, and

where do the boundaries end in giving information? However, if they had acted in a more responsible manner it may have avoided the deaths and violence that occurred. Freedom of speech and expression is important but there are consequences if these rights are not used in a responsible manner.

Freedom of speech and expression are fundamental within our society. But, with rights come responsibilities and obligations. Using these rights responsibly is a necessity. This does not necessarily mean censorship but there are consequences that should be considered when using the rights of freedom of speech and expression.

Source: <http://www.civilrightsmovement.co.uk/right-freedom-speech.html>



Bill Would Give President Emergency Control of Internet

by Declan McCullagh – [CNET](http://www.cnet.com)

Internet companies and civil liberties groups were **alarmed** this spring when a U.S. Senate bill **proposed** handing the White House the power to disconnect private-sector computers from the Internet.

They're not much happier about a revised version that aides to Sen. Jay Rockefeller, a West Virginia Democrat, have spent months drafting behind closed doors. CNET News has obtained a copy of the 55-page draft of S.773 (**excerpt**), which still appears to permit the president to seize temporary control of private-sector networks during a so-called cybersecurity emergency.

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The new version would allow the president to "declare a cybersecurity emergency" relating to "non-governmental" computer networks and do what's necessary to respond to the threat. Other sections of the proposal include a federal certification program for "cybersecurity professionals," and a requirement that certain computer systems and networks in the private sector be managed by people who have been awarded that license.

"I think the redraft, while improved, remains troubling due to its vagueness," said Larry Clinton, president of the [Internet Security Alliance](#), which counts representatives of Verizon, Verisign, Nortel, and Carnegie Mellon University on its board. "It is unclear what authority Sen. Rockefeller thinks is necessary over the private sector. Unless this is clarified, we cannot properly analyze, let alone support the bill."

Representatives of other large Internet and telecommunications companies expressed concerns about the bill in a teleconference with Rockefeller's aides this week, but were not immediately available for interviews on Thursday.

A spokesman for Rockefeller also declined to comment on the record Thursday, saying that many people were unavailable because of the summer recess. A Senate source familiar with the bill compared the president's power to take control of portions of the Internet to what President Bush did when grounding all aircraft on Sept. 11, 2001. The source said that one primary concern was the electrical grid, and what would happen if it were attacked from a broadband connection.

When Rockefeller, the chairman of the Senate Commerce committee, and Olympia Snowe (R-Maine) introduced the original bill in April, they [claimed](#) it was vital to protect national cybersecurity. "We must protect our critical infrastructure at all costs—from our water to our electricity, to banking, traffic lights and electronic health records," Rockefeller said.

The Rockefeller proposal plays out against a broader concern in Washington, D.C., about the government's role in cybersecurity. In May, President Obama [acknowledged](#) that the government is "not as prepared" as it should be to respond to disruptions and announced that a new cybersecurity coordinator position would be created inside the White House staff. Three months later, that post remains empty, one top cybersecurity aide [has quit](#), and some wags have begun to wonder why a government that [receives failing marks](#) on cybersecurity should be trusted to instruct the private sector what to do.

Rockefeller's revised legislation seeks to reshuffle the way the federal government addresses the topic. It requires a "cybersecurity workforce plan" from every federal agency, a "dashboard" pilot project, measurements of hiring effectiveness, and the implementation of a "comprehensive national cybersecurity strategy" in six months—even though its mandatory legal review will take a year to complete.

The privacy implications of sweeping changes implemented before the legal review is finished worry [Lee Tien](#), a senior staff attorney with the [Electronic Frontier Foundation](#) in San Francisco. "As soon as you're saying that the federal government is going to be exercising this kind of power over private networks, it's going to be a really big issue," he says.

Probably the most controversial language begins in Section 201, which permits the president to "direct

the national response to the cyber threat” if necessary for “the national defense and security.” The White House is supposed to engage in “periodic mapping” of private networks deemed to be critical, and those companies “shall share” requested information with the federal government. (“Cyber” is defined as anything having to do with the Internet, telecommunications, computers, or computer networks.)

“The language has changed but it doesn’t contain any real additional limits,” EFF’s Tien says. “It simply switches the more direct and obvious language they had originally to the more ambiguous (version)...The designation of what is a critical infrastructure system or network as far as I can tell has no specific process. There’s no provision for any administrative process or review. That’s where the problems seem to start. And then you have the amorphous powers that go along with it.”

Translation: If your company is deemed “critical,” a new set of regulations kick in involving who you can hire, what information you must disclose, and when the government would exercise control over your computers or network.

The Internet Security Alliance’s Clinton adds that his group is “supportive of increased federal involvement to enhance cyber security, but we believe that the wrong approach, as embodied in this bill as introduced, will be counterproductive both from an national economic and national security perspective.”

Update at 3:14 p.m. PDT: I just talked to Jena Longo, deputy communications director for the Senate Commerce committee, on the phone. She sent me e-mail with this statement:

The president of the United States has always had the constitutional authority, and duty, to protect the American people and direct the national response to any emergency that threatens the security and safety of the United States. The Rockefeller-Snowe Cybersecurity bill makes it clear that the president’s authority includes securing our national cyber infrastructure from attack. The section of the bill that addresses this issue, applies specifically to the national response to a severe attack or natural disaster. This particular legislative language is based on longstanding statutory authorities for wartime use of communications networks. To be very clear, the Rockefeller-Snowe bill will not empower a “government shutdown or takeover of the Internet” and any suggestion otherwise is misleading and false. The purpose of this language is to clarify how the president directs the public-private response to a crisis, secure our economy and safeguard our financial networks, protect the American people, their privacy and civil liberties, and coordinate the government’s response.

Unfortunately, I’m still waiting for an on-the-record answer to [these four questions](#) that I asked her colleague on Wednesday. I’ll let you know if and when I get a response.

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Query from CBS News re: revised Rockefeller/Cybersecurity Act / S.773
Date: Wed, 26 Aug 2009 14:20:11 -0700
From: Declan McCullagh <declan@cbsnews.com>
Reply-To: declan@cbsnews.com
Organization: CBSNews.com
To: charles_stewart@commerce.senate.gov

Charles,

Thanks for talking a minute ago. I'm reading a revised draft of the

Cybersecurity Act/S.773 dated this month and had a few questions:

* The original version of the legislation allowed the National Cybersecurity Advisor to disconnect "critical" networks from the Internet. The revised version says the president can "declare a cybersecurity emergency" relating to "nongovernmental" networks and "direct the national response to the cyber threat." That seems vague: does it mean the executive branch does or does *not* have the power to disconnect private networks?

* The revised version gives the executive branch 180 days to "implement" a "comprehensive national cybersecurity strategy" and 90 days to develop a plan to implement a "dashboard pilot project." But the mandated legal review won't be done until 1 year. Why not wait until the legal review is done before implementing a "comprehensive national cybersecurity strategy?"

* In Silicon Valley and the tech industry in general, lots of employees do not have formal training in computer security (they may studied math or physics, for instance) but nevertheless work in that area. Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, Michael Dell, Larry Ellison, don't have college degrees. Will the cybersecurity certification program be open to non-degreed people? And does the "certified service provider" extend to services like Gmail and Hotmail?

* One section says that private sector crit. infrastructure firms "shall share" certain information with the federal government. Is this open-ended, or are there limits to this requirement?

Thanks for your help!

Best,
Declan

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Internet Under Siege

by Phil Giraldi — AntiWar.com



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Internet Under Siege

by [Philip Giraldi](#),

It is ironic that President Barack Obama would travel to China and speak against government control over the internet. If the American Department of Homeland Security has its way new cybersecurity laws will enable Obama's administration to take control of the internet in the event of a national crisis. How that national crisis might be defined would be up to the White House but there have been some precedents that suggest that the response would hardly be respectful of the Bill of Rights.

Many countries already monitor and censor the internet on a regular basis, forbidding access to numerous sites that they consider to be subversive. During recent unrest, the governments of both Iran and China effectively shut down the internet by taking control of or blocking servers. Combined with switching off of cell phone transmitters, the steps proved effective in isolating dissidents. Could it happen here? Undoubtedly. Once the laws are in place a terrorist incident or something that could be plausibly described in those terms would be all that is needed to have government officials issue the order to bring the internet to a halt.

Government intrusion in the private lives of citizens is already a reality, particularly in the so-called Western Democracies that have the necessary technology and tech-savvy manpower to tap phones and invade computers. In Europe, draconian anti-terrorism laws enable security agencies to monitor phone calls and e-mails, in many cases without any judicial oversight. In Britain the monitoring includes access to detailed internet records that are available for inspection by no less than 653 government agencies, most of which have nothing whatsoever to do with security or intelligence, all without any judicial review.

In the United States the Pentagon recently sought an internet and news "instant response capability" which it dubbed the Office of Strategic Influence and evidence is growing that it has seeded a number of retired military analysts into the major news networks to provide a pro-government slant on the war news. The State Department is also in the game, tasking young officers to engage presumed radicals

in debate on their websites. There also is the warrantless wiretapping program, which continues under the Obama administration in spite of pre-electoral promises that it would be stopped, while the growing use of national security letters means that private communications carried out using the internet can be accessed by Federal law enforcement agencies. The national security letter, established by the PATRIOT Act, is an investigative tool that is particularly insidious as it does not require judicial oversight. More than 35,000 were issued by the FBI last year and the recipient of a letter commits a felony if he or she reveals the receipt of the document. In a recent case involving an internet provider in Philadelphia, a national security letter demanded all details of internet messages sent on a certain date, to include account information on clients with social security numbers and credit card references.

The free flow of information on the internet has also produced a reaction among those who are more concerned with getting out a specific message. If you have noticed the frequent appearance of bloggers and "talkbackers" on the various internet sites who write in less than perfect English and who always support attacking Iran and are defensive about Israel, sometimes overwhelming sites with garbage messages, you are not alone as it is clear that a sustained effort is underway to intimidate, influence opinion, and suppress opposing views. The United States and Israeli governments have taken the lead in putting out propaganda over the internet and there are also indications that several European countries, including Britain and Germany, are engaged in creating regulatory hurdles and countering information that they do not approve of. When the debate is open and the interlocutors are identifying themselves as government representatives one might well argue that the process is healthy as it permits a genuine exchange of views, but where the government hand is hidden the exchange should be regarded as little more than propaganda, what the old Soviet Union might well have referred to as "agitprop."

The focus on war by other means over the internet is important, if only because it means that governments are using their vast resources to spread propaganda in a deliberate effort to confuse the debate over important foreign and domestic policy issues. Israel is at the forefront, exploiting its cutting edge telecommunications industry and enabled by its large and powerful diaspora to get out its message. Not surprisingly, its lobbies including AIPAC are also leaders in the effort, sometimes acting openly and sometimes covertly.

Israel became heavily engaged on the internet during its devastating assault on Gaza last January, when world opinion came down strongly against it, recruiting teams of young soldiers and students to blog in support of Operation Cast Lead. It has recently focused on the UN's Goldstone Report that claimed that Tel Aviv had committed numerous war crimes in Gaza, supporting a worldwide organized campaign to discredit anyone promoting the report. The latest victim of the smear has been the respected and nonpartisan group Human Rights Watch (HRW). In June Israel's Deputy Prime Minister pledged that his government would "dedicate time and manpower to combating" human rights organizations. Shortly afterwards Ron Dermer of the Israeli Prime Minister's office named Human Rights Watch as one of the offending organizations. Many attacks on HRW were subsequently carried out openly using various front organizations, including NGO Monitor which is based in Jerusalem and funded by wealthy Americans. Elie Wiesel, who cashes in on his humanitarian credentials while remaining notably silent over Israeli war crimes, is on the Monitor board and has written a letter attacking HRW. Critical pieces in the *Wall Street Journal* and *New York Times* soon followed the initial attacks, commentary that was distributed widely by AIPAC on Capitol Hill and also all over the internet.

Israel's Foreign Ministry, headed by right-wing extremist Avigdor Lieberman, runs a semi-covert program which is openly funded by the government as the "internet fighting team" but which deliberately conceals the affiliation of the "talkbackers." Ilan Shturman coordinates the Ministry effort, which is run out of the Hasbara Department, "hasbara" being a Hebrew word that is normally translated

as propaganda. Shturman's young and enthusiastic employees work from a prepared script of official Israeli government positions. They are instructed not to identify themselves either as Israelis or as government employees. There have been numerous applicants to work for Shturman. An Israeli source reports that one applicant emphasized his own qualifications, writing "I'm fluent in several languages and I'm able to spew forth bullsh*t for hours on end."

But there is also concern that the program will further distort the news cycle which is already suffering from deliberately misleading government leaks, making it impossible to discern what information that is surfacing is being fabricated. One Israeli critic of the Foreign Ministry program has described it as part of a "thought police state." And the effort is increasingly international in nature. During the attack on Gaza, Shturman headed an effort to obtain the assistance of Jews abroad, recruiting a "few thousand" to work with his Israeli volunteers to bombard hostile websites with Israel-friendly commentary. Much of the chatter is in English, though the teams also work in the other principal European languages. Recent immigrants from the Israeli government's Ministry of Absorption have been recruited and used to attack sites in their own more exotic native languages.

The Israeli government program is expected to increase. A private advocacy group called Give Israel Your United Support has a reported 50,000 activists who use a specially developed software called megaphone that sends an alert when anti-Israeli commentary appears, permitting supporters to bombard the hostile site with their own comments. In July, 5,000 members of the World Union of Jewish Students were given the megaphone software. There are also reports that several American Christian evangelical groups have indicated that they are interested in helping the cause. The goal is to have hundreds of thousands of activists worldwide who are prepared to place messages supportive of Israel.

The danger is real. Most Americans who are critical of the actions of their own government rely on the internet for information that is uncensored and often provocative, including sites like Antiwar.com. As the United States generally follows Israeli initiatives for security it is likely only a matter of time before Obama's internet warfare teams surface either at the Defense Department or at State. Deliberately overloading and attacking the internet to damage its credibility is all too possible; witness the numerous sites that have been "hacked" and have had to shut down or restrict their activities. American citizens who are concerned about maintaining their few remaining liberties should sound the alarm and tell the politicians that we don't need more government advice on what we should think and do. Hands off the internet.

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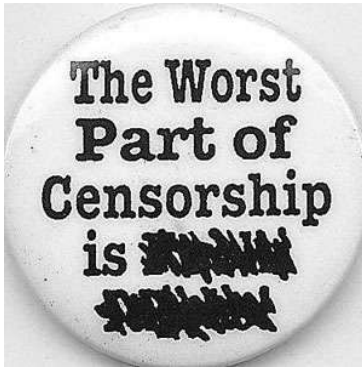
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<http://original.antiwar.com/giraldi/2009/11/18/internet-under-siege/>

The Coming Media Bailout The Coming Media Bailout

by Justin Raimondo – AntiWar.com



The Federal Trade Commission is threatening to use antitrust and copyright laws to shut down the New Media – and save “mainstream” journalism

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC), which usually concerns itself with “consumer protection” issues, is now [taking an interest](#) in the journalism industry. The [financially strapped](#) *New York Times* [reports](#):

“The commission is planning [two days of workshops](#) in December – titled ‘From Town Criers to Bloggers: How Will Journalism Survive the Internet Age?’ – to examine the state of the news industry.”

This ominous development ought to scare the pants off of anyone concerned with the maintenance of a free society – and the continued existence of dissent in an increasingly conformist profession where “journalists” are often [reduced](#) to the status of mere stenographers as they eagerly communicate to the masses the words, wishes, wit, and wisdom of government officials.

The FTC was the progeny of the “Progressive” Era, which, as Murray Rothbard [reminds](#) us, “begins around 1900 with Teddy Roosevelt and so forth. Woodrow Wilson cements it with his so-called reforms which totally subject the banking system to federal power and with the Federal Trade Commission, which did for business what the Interstate Commerce Commission did for the railroads. In other words, he imposed a system of monopoly capitalism, or corporate state monopoly, which we now call the partnership of the government and of big business and industry, which means essentially a corporate state, or we can call it economic fascism.”

The creation of the FTC was occasioned by a campaign for the radical expansion of the federal government, and, [not coincidentally](#), the beginning of [World War I](#) – a set of circumstances that roughly resembles what we are experiencing today. This gives a particularly sinister edge to the FTC’s sudden interest in the struggling newspaper industry and remarks by FTC chairman Jon Leibowitz to the effect that “Competition among news organizations involves more than just price.”

That’s indubitably true: it’s all about content. Yet one fails to see how – in a free society – the government can concern itself with such matters. Or why it should. That is, until one reads onward in the *Times* piece, and discovers that Leibowitz “is married to [Ruth Marcus](#), an editorial writer at the *Washington Post*.”

The *Post*, like all newspapers, is [losing money](#) hand over fist: apparently [its niche](#) as the voice of elite opinion and the conventional wisdom isn’t paying off. Those “lunches” with powerful politicians and grasping lobbyists might have made some big bucks, if the whole shady business hadn’t [blown up in their faces](#) and forced them to cancel. So, when all else fails, these sorts instinctively turn to the

government for some advantage or handout, although the exact nature of the “[newspaper bailout](#)” that all too many journalists have been talking about has yet to take shape. That’s what these “workshops” are for: they’ll figure out a way to feed at the public trough and no doubt come up with a credible-sounding rationale, as per the *Times* piece:

“Though some may be uncomfortable with government oversight of any aspect of journalism, the F.T.C. seems to be ‘attempting to play a facilitating and public educational role in gathering together various disciplines and perspectives to talk about the crisis in mainstream journalism,’ said Neil Henry, a [professor and dean](#) at the graduate school of journalism at the University of California, Berkeley. ‘The government’s willingness to raise the profile of this issue, and to help explain why it is important for a national conversation, I think in general is welcome.’”

The tone is unmistakable: those few archaic types who may experience discomfort at the thought of some Washington bureaucrat prescribing a cure for what ails journalistic enterprise are living fossils, ungrateful wretches, and paranoid to boot. No need to worry, though: Professor Henry assures us the Feds are just “facilitating” the “national conversation” – but who started this conversation, anyway? A bunch of self-styled “mainstream” journalists and a government bureaucrat married to one, who have a pecuniary interest in finagling federal funding for their cash-strapped employers and stifling the competition, i.e., Internet-based news organization (such as, say, [this one](#)).

As the FTC Web site [puts it](#):

“The workshops will consider a wide range of issues, including: the economics of journalism and how those economics are playing out on the Internet and in print ... online news aggregators, and bloggers; and the variety of governmental policies – including antitrust, copyright, and tax policy – that have been raised as possible means of finding new ways for journalism to thrive.”

So what this means is that the Old Journalism is going to deploy an agency of the federal government to regulate the industry in order to save these tired old dinosaurs who don’t deserve to survive in the first place. They’ll use every weapon in the government’s arsenal to do it: antitrust laws ([watch out, Craigslist!](#)), copyright laws (forget about linking to an Associated Press story: that’s [copyright infringement!](#)), and “tax policy” – if we can’t get them by hook or by crook, we’ll just [tax](#) the New Media to death. *That*’ll teach them to respect their elders!

Note, also, that the professor is very specific in his concerns: it’s “the crisis in mainstream journalism” he’s oh-so-worried about and that the government is going to find a solution to – as opposed to, you know, the other kind of journalism, which is all [icky](#), not to mention downright disreputable.

So what is it about “mainstream journalism,” anyway, that led to this supposed “crisis,” which government facilitators – such as a man married to a *Washington Post* columnist – are going to lead us out of?

Well, I’m just [guessing](#), but maybe “consumers” – i.e., readers – weren’t at all happy with the [level](#) and [nature](#) of the coverage provided by the Old Journalism. Maybe they began to distrust and finally abandon completely all those “news” organizations that reported [with a straight face](#) the Bush administration’s [claims](#) that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. Maybe the social and political [collusion](#) that goes on in Washington between government officials and “journalists” led them to distrust the latter as much as they disdain the former. It hardly matters that these consumers don’t need or want “protection” from bloggers and non-”mainstream” news sources – but you can bet your bottom dollar they’re going to get it anyway. After all, the Nanny State knows best: we’re from the government, and we’re here to help...

Yeah, *right!*

The “mainstream” media is, [by definition](#), the instrument and servant of the state. The *Washington Post*, for example, doesn’t challenge the conventional wisdom; rather, it lives to enforce it as accepted fact. And when the “facts” turn out to be otherwise, as in the case of Iraq’s WMDs – well, then, “[Oops! That’s what everybody thought!](#)”

And, of course, the media did [a lot](#) to ensure the election of our current president. Without all that favorable – even fawning – coverage, he might not have gotten the Democratic nomination and sailed to victory quite as easily as he did. So this sudden interest in the preservation of “mainstream” journalism is the payoff. In the American spoils system, all the victor’s foot soldiers are rewarded with their fair share of the pelf.

The idea that the FTC is going to start regulating the journalism business – or even start a “national conversation” about the prospect of doing so – ought to send chills down the spines of every real journalist in this country. Unfortunately, it won’t: most of these guys and gals are self-styled “[progressives](#)” who can’t very well make an argument against government intervention in their industry while they endorse bailing out the rest of the economy. Why, the government is our *friend* – and if you don’t believe that, you’re a wacko extremist who’s probably bringing guns to town hall meetings.

The way they’ll lull liberals into accepting this unprecedented FTC “interest” in journalism is to aver that this is Obama’s government we’re talking about here, and *he* would never countenance government control of the news industry. Our guy is in the saddle – so don’t worry about that whip he’s carrying, because of course he won’t actually *use* it...

A media bailout is coming. They’ll think up some sort of half-a**ed rationale for it. Leave it to Professor Henry and his trendy confreres; that’s what they get paid for. They won’t call it government control of the news, they won’t acknowledge that’s what they want, but when the first news aggregator gets prosecuted by the FTC for “copyright infringement” and the indispensable Craigslist is slapped with a fine for “unfair competition,” please don’t say I didn’t warn you.

The FTC couldn’t regulate Bernie Madoff, in spite of being [tipped off](#) about his activities and presented with evidence of crimes – but they sure can start a “national conversation” about saving the sorry a**es of the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*. Well, I’d like to start a “national conversation” of my own – all about how scared, clueless, and terminally lazy “journalists” and their friends in high places are angling for advantage, at our expense. That’s one conversation Leibowitz, his fellow bureaucrats, and their journalistic handmaidens would never permit.

SOURCE: [AntiWar.com](#)

Internet Censorship Alert! Alex Jones exposes agenda to 'blacklist' dissenting sites





<http://www.infowars.com/> The Western world, from Australia to the United States, UK and parts of Europe, are moving in a unified front toward dictatorial Internet censorship. Australia has led the...
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The Western world, from Australia to the United States, UK and parts of Europe, are moving in a unified front toward dictatorial Internet censorship. Australia has led the way, despite outcry from its populace, by "filtering" out certain banned content. In the United States, Sen. Jay Rockefeller, in continuing his family's tradition of oppressing free humanity, has pushed forward Cybersecurity legislation that has already passed the House. He has done so in the name of warding off ghastly cyber "attackers" conceivably fronting for al Qaeda while ushering in a means to restrict free speech and expression online for the general population.

With Obama's support, most of the developed world has accepted plans for government-approved online activity and Pentagon-monitored internet traffic. The U.S. and UK are facilitating the hijacking of what has, until now, been a highly-democratic Internet. Overall, it has been a technological God-send for bringing together communication and strongly expressing thought outside of the mainstream information available on television and in print.

Now, people are being forced onto the corporate-dominated Internet2-- once again, in the name of "security." (Internet) Freedom sacrificed at the same false altar of (Internet) Security. Independent blogs, news sites and online businesses will all be financially disadvantaged by access fees not demanded of dominant entities. What is today outside the 'norm' but well within free speech will tomorrow be evaluated by politically-correct criteria that will be used to identify sites to block and users to deny access.

Already, referrals to sites like Infowars.com and PrisonPlanet.com are being denied not only in Australia, but in places like New Zealand-- who have not adopted the same policies, but do share ISPs

who have ordered a block. All across the world, wherever internet "filtering" and outright censorship has been phased in-- via libraries, businesses, airports, and so forth, sites that are critical of government are consistently blocked first. This has been true not only of Alex Jones' several websites, but also of sites like Wikileaks, Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), Cryptome and etc, etc. The common theme is not operating outside of law or of speaking in extremities, but challenging the power establishment through distribution of information and/or shedding light on its otherwise little known unscrupulous activities.

This Orwellian scheme has already been branded by the outrages of Cass Sunstein, one of the Obama 'Czars', who has called for governments to ban "conspiratorial theories" and identified thought-crimes including a disbelief in man-made global warming and a belief in the basic goodness of "sunshine." In considering how to eradicate 'outlawed' beliefs, Sunstein posits the benefits of using bloggers to engage and counter 'disinformation.' A very similar version of this strategy has already been adopted by the Pentagon in its "infowars" campaign.

Alex uses his most-recent experience in an outright ban to sound a warning that the enemy is already among us. Internet censorship threatens to stifle out a recent phenomenon of free thought and widespread information that has flourished on the Internet / world wide web. Only by standing up to undue constraints on our rights and by saying no to efforts to chill speech on the web can we save a stronghold of free humanity.

Watch the video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MG--42sjAvA&feature=player_embedded

The bottom line is that the Internet is really a medium of communication and free speech. The fact that information can travel quickly now via the internet is concerning those people who want to control others. The internet can organize and bring people together to form groups and movements. That is not what ruling and controlling governments want. All the laws passed are presented to the people as being for our betterment. we all know differently. Life,Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness are God given rights inherent to each person. The only way is contact U.S. senators from your states and send an email to their offices opposing this draconian act to restrict the internet.



David Icke: The Turning of the Tide. We are THE Generation That WILL TURN THE TIDE

Exposing the real story behind global events, which shape the future of human existence and the world we leave our children. The veil lifts on an astonishing web of interconnected manipulation to reveal that the same few people, secret societies and organizations control the daily direction of our lives, & how the same people on apparently different sides of politics are actually connected to the same elite organizations. These organizations have the same proven agenda of a world government, a world central bank, a world army, a world currency, and some say a micro-chipped population. "OPPO-SAMES" These apparent opposites in politics are there to persuade us that we are not living in a prison, that we have a choice. Yet these persons are not opposites at all but are part of a one-party state. The last two US Presidents were apparently opposites and on different sides - Bill Clinton and George Bush - yet they were both heavily involved within the same elite organizations. David Icke explains: "What happens in practice is that if you look at all the dogmas in all cultures, all societies have what I call a 'hassle-free zone.' It is that area within any culture, within each dogma (religious, economic, political etc) wherein if you conform to it, you are in the comfort zone. No one's going to laugh at you, condemn you for being different, or for expressing your uniqueness, because you are locked into the herd mentality, and you are conforming to what you are told you should be and do. When you step out of this mind-set and express your unique aspect of all that exists and refuse to be frightened, or controlled, you immediately face ridicule or condemnation as I have in England." "THE SHEEPL" "Whatever happened to living? The vast majority of people, rich and poor, on this planet are enslaved. Enslaved by the system's robotic programming, its economic imprisonment, and by their own refusal to think, question and find the liberation that comes with an open mind. We don't live in a free society, we live as robots in a society in which you are free to do what the society wants you to do - produce and consume - that's the reality." A "MUST READ" book for understanding how the fraud really affects you and what you can do about it.



David Icke Watch the video:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HOgn6d0-RrU&feature=player_embedded