



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on July 23, 2015

UN and Federal Threats to Internet Freedom Loom Large (Video)

There are several key threats to Internet freedom facing Americans and the world today. The first is net neutrality, an unconstitutional scheme that was adopted by the FCC recently. The second is the effort to put the Internet under the control of governments, the United Nations, and so-called “stakeholders.”



I want to talk to you today a little bit about both of these threats and why we need to fight them if we’re going to keep our online freedom, which is of course crucial to maintaining our other freedoms.

Let’s start with Net Neutrality. What is it? Well, neutrality certainly has a nice sound to it. But as usual the devil is in the details.

Basically, net neutrality is the idea that the government needs to regulate the architecture of the Internet under the guise of protecting us from evil corporations.

The argument in favor of Net Neutrality goes something like this: If the government doesn’t step in, Internet Service Providers might hypothetically decide to give priority to some websites and online services over others — perhaps forcing companies or websites to pay for faster content delivery to consumers.

Is that conceivable in a free market? Yes. Is it a problem? Not really. If that is what consumers and the market want, what’s wrong with it? Markets have a way of sorting out most problems and delivering what consumers want. Businesses that defy consumers obviously go out of business, at least without a government bailout.

Either way, Net Neutrality is really just a ruse to let the government take over the Internet. After lots of debate and back and forth, the FCC voted in February of 2015 to start regulating the Internet as a “public utility” under arcane laws, supposedly to protect you.

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The United Nations, which I and others refer to as the dictators club, was very pleased. The UN “special rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression” praised the FCC’s Net Neutrality scheme as a “model for other governments.”

Of course, the federal government does not have the constitutional authority to do that in the first place, but leaving that aside, it’s still a bad idea. Think of it as the camel’s nose under the tent.

Taxes and further regulation will inevitably follow if this is allowed to stand. In fact, FCC Commissioner Ajit Pai warned in May of 2015 that other federal bureaucracies, following the FCC’s lead, were hoping to start regulating content on the Web, too. He warned that the FEC would even seek to regulate



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websites such as the Drudge Report.

But the FEC, the FCC, and the Obama administration are not the only threats to Internet freedom. As we've documented extensively in *The New American* magazine, the UN and many of its most autocratic member regimes want to control the Web as well.

First, they tried to float a plot that would give the UN International Telecommunications Union jurisdiction to regulate and potentially tax the web. Communist and Islamist dictatorships within the ITU were the chief promoters of this lunacy, but not the only ones by any means.

As if to drive home the seriousness of the threat, the ITU's members voted in 2014 to put Chinese Communist Houlin Zhao in charge of the UN organ — a Chinese Communist who told a Korean news agency after his selection that censorship is essentially in the eye of the beholder. The dictatorship in Beijing, of course, operates the largest and most sophisticated online censorship regime on the planet.

Sensing the overwhelming hostility to allowing the dictators' club to control the Internet, would-be Internet controllers shifted to new tactics, working toward what they call a "multi-stake holder" approach that would let Big Business, Big Government, the UN, and carefully selected so-called civil society groups control the web instead. This is just as dangerous as handing over the Internet to the UN and its members, most of which are autocratic and none of which uphold all of the God-given rights enshrined in our Constitution.

Critical to this whole Internet agenda was the Obama administration's bizarre decision to hand over control of ICANN, a key element of the Internet's architecture, to a global "multi-stake holder" outfit.

Americans have been warned by many experts and liberty advocates about the perils of surrendering U.S. control of the Internet. Now, if we hope to keep our online freedom, we need to get busy protecting the free World Wide Web and the free speech it enables from politicians, dictators, and bureaucrats who hate both.



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