

To the FCC Commissioners
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am responding to a form letter I received today. I have a few concerns that I hope can be addressed with just this one simple letter with quotes from our founding fathers. The only reason I decided to reply to this is years ago when I just started on the internet there were only a handful of bbs and one or two internet providers and they were both proprietary and very expensive, IE Prodigy I signed on AOL a couple of years later feeling that anything with AMERICA in the company name would be a peoples internet which on the surface it was there were tons of users there and I enjoyed all the help till one night I entered an argument about free speech, no foul language was used but I was kicked off for stating my opinion! That to me was more than I could handle So as I did then I wrote AOL a nice letter stating what had happened and how this could happen>. I was totally ignored by them and disappointed that I wasn't taken seriously, so I disconnected my service with Aol.

The point of the matter is giving a company that freedom to censor others thoughts opinions and speech whether it is normal or foul in content is not what this country was founded on! Please read this entire letter, It is an important document that will explain many things to any question you have about your rights and the rights of others. My favorite quote is at the top "*I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it*".

The Internet is in mortal danger, and you will make the decision on whether it lives or dies as we know it today. From the time it was invented, the internet has been a medium of public exchange of information. Often this information has been useful in daily living, sometimes it has been controversial, occasionally it has been offensive to someone. But I have had the freedom to post it without fear of being excluded from the internet. I no longer have that right if I wish to have high-speed access. There is no effective high-speed access except Time Warner. Time Warner adds this clause to its acceptable use policy states:
TIME WARNER COMMUNICATIONS SHALL HAVE THE SOLE AND UNREVIEWABLE RIGHT TO DETERMINE WHETHER CONTENT VIOLATES THESE STANDARDS.
The "standards" are such that absolutely anything I post could be considered to violate them. Even if I do not violate these standards, if I purchase "unlimited access" as soon as I try to use it, I am either speed-capped or terminated. The acceptable use policy states:
IF TIME WARNER DETERMINES THAT THE SUBSCRIBER HAS FAILED TO COMPLY WITH THE SERVICE'S STANDARDS OF CONDUCT OR LIMITS ON BANDWIDTH UTILIZATION, TIME WARNER MAY SUSPEND SUBSCRIBER'S ACCOUNT.
It appears that Time Warner wants only customers who do not upload any comments and who use the service merely to purchase additional services. As I have been using the internet for quite a long time to communicate, not spend money with Time Warner, Time Warner doesn't want me.
It appears that you will approve the AOL Time Warner merger in some manner. If you do not act to require the merged company to return to the basic principles of freedom of speech, there will be no hope for

people like me who want to communicate, not purchase more Bugs Bunny cartoons. The new company will totally control high-speed access. People like me will not be allowed on the internet through the new company.

It seems that you will establish some protection for the large corporations. Will you protect me too?

The internet is a creation of America, and shows the world the power of freedom. It will be a sad commentary if the country which created freedom kills the most powerful voice for freedom now existing in the world. It will be a reflection on our country if all citizens of the world have freedom of speech on the internet, except American citizens. As the internet was designed for the citizens, not the corporations, I sincerely hope you consider me when you make your decision. If you do not, I believe that the result will be the death of the internet as a powerful force for freedom in general, and freedom of speech in particular.

The First Amendment



Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Constitution of the United States
First Amendment

I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.

Voltaire

If all mankind minus one were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind.

John Stuart Mill
On Liberty

Freedom is always freedom for the one who thinks differently.

Rosa Luxemburg

Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.

John Milton
English poet

Those who call for censorship in the name of the oppressed ought to recognize it is never the oppressed who determine the bounds of censorship.

Aryeh Neier
Civil Libertarian

If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion or other matters of opinion.

Robert H. Jackson
Supreme Court Justice

Every man has a right to utter what he thinks truth, and every man has a right to knock him down for it.

Dr. Samuel Johnson
English author, lexicographer

The sound of tireless voices is the price we pay for the right to hear the music of our own opinions.

Adlai Stevenson
American politician

Heresy is only another word for freedom of thought.

Graham Greene
British novelist

The Price and Promise of Freedom

Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans, born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage, and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world.

Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy
Inaugural address

Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must, like men, undergo the fatigue of supporting it.

Thomas Paine
The American Crisis, no. 4

In Germany they came first for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't Communist.

Then they came for the Jews and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew.

Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist.

They they came for the Catholics and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant.

Then they came for me, and by that time there was no one left to speak up.

Martin Niemoeller

First they came for the fourth amendment, and I did not speak out, because I didn't deal drugs.

Then they came for the fifth amendment, and I was silent because I owned no property involved in crimes.

Then they came for the sixth amendment, and I did not protest because I was innocent.

Then they came for the second amendment, and I said nothing because I didn't like guns.

And then they at last came for the first amendment, and I could say nothing at all.

Unknown

None are more hopelessly enslaved than those who falsely believe they are free.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
German writer and Philosopher

The whole history of the progress of human liberty shows that all concessions yet made to her august claims have been born of earnest struggle. If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground, they want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters.

Frederick Douglass

Let us therefore animate and encourage each other, and show the whole world that a

Freeman, contending for liberty on his own ground, is superior to any slavish mercenary on earth.

George Washington, July 2, 1776

I would remind you that extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice. And let me remind you also that moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue.

Barry Goldwater
American Republican Senator and Presidential candidate

Everyone carries a part of society on his shoulders; no one is relieved of his share of responsibility by others. And no one can find a safe way out for himself if society is sweeping towards destruction. Therefore everyone, in his own interests, must thrust himself vigorously into the intellectual battle. None can stand aside with unconcern; the interests of everyone hang on the result. Whether he chooses or not, every man is drawn into the great historical struggle, the decisive battle into which our epoch has plunged us.

Ludwig von Mises

Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. And when you look long into an abyss, remember, the abyss also looks into you.

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche
Beyond Good and Evil

We can see a time when...the only people at liberty will be prison guards who will then have to lock up one another. ...and that will be the ideal society in which problems of opposition, the headache of all twentieth century governments, will be settled once and for all.

Albert Camus

We, too, born to freedom, and believing in freedom, are willing to fight to maintain freedom. We, and all others who believe as deeply as we do, would rather die on our feet than live on our knees.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt
On receiving the degree of Doctor of Civil Law from Oxford University

Is life so dear or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God. I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!

Patrick Henry
Speech in Virginia Convention

You should never wear your best trousers when you go out to fight for freedom and truth.

Henrik Ibsen
An Enemy of the People, act VII

Let Freedom Ring



Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.
Leviticus 25:10

Whenever we take away the liberties of those whom we hate we are opening the way to loss of liberty for those we love.

Wendell L. Wilkie
American lawyer, businessman, politician

There is only one cure for the evils which newly acquired freedom produces, and that cure is freedom.

Thomas Babington , Lord Macaulay

If a nation values anything more than freedom, it will lose its freedom; and the irony of it is that if it is comfort or money that it values more, it will lose that too.

William Somerset Maugham

None who have always been free can understand the terrible fascinating power of the hope of freedom to those who are not free.

Pearl S. Buck
American novelist

The basic test of freedom is perhaps less in what we are free to do than in what we are free not to do.

Eric Hoffer
American philosopher

Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind.

John Milton

I believe there are more instances of the abridgment of the freedom of the people by gradual and silent encroachments of those in power than by violent and sudden usurpations.

James Madison
Speech in the Virginia Convention

Necessity is the plea for every infringement of human freedom. It is the argument of tyrants; it is the creed of slaves.

William Pitt
Speech in the House of Commons

Individual liberty is individual power, and as the power of a community is a mass compounded of individual powers, the nation which enjoys the most freedom must necessarily be in proportion to its numbers the most powerful nation.

John Quincy Adams
Letter to James Lloyd

*For what avail the plow or sail,
Or land, or life, if freedom fail?*

Ralph Waldo Emerson
May-Day and Other Pieces

Liberty is not a means to a higher political end. It is itself the highest political end.

Lord Acton
The History of Freedom and Other Essays

The one pervading evil of democracy is the tyranny of the majority, or rather of that party, not always the majority, that succeeds ... in carrying elections.

Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.

The system of private property is the most important guaranty of freedom, not only for those who own property, but scarcely less for those who do not.

Friedrich August von Hayek
The Road to Serfdom

History suggests that capitalism is a necessary condition for political freedom. Clearly it is not a sufficient condition.

Milton Friedman



The lost promise of Lady Liberty

The New Colossus

*"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest tossed, to me;*

I lift my lamp beside the golden door".

By Emma Lazarus
From the base of the Statue of Liberty

I see that you, too, put up monuments to your great dead.

Anonymous Frenchman upon seeing the Statue of Liberty
during prohibition.

What are lies?

A friend's response to the **Jeopardy** answer
"This is written on the base of the Statue of Liberty"



The 2nd Amendment



A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

Constitution of the United States
Second Amendment

What if the 2nd had read "A literate population, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and read books, shall not be infringed"? Would that allow the State to restrict books to libraries or require licenses for their possession? What about exceptionally dangerous or subversive books?

J. Neil Schulman
Author and political commentator

No free man shall ever be debarred the use of arms. The strongest reason for the people to retain the right to keep and bear arms is, as a last resort, to protect themselves against tyranny in government

Thomas Jefferson
Jefferson Papers

Arms in the hands of the individual citizens may be used at individual discretion...in private self defense.

John Adams
A Defense of the Constitution of the United States

That the said Constitution shall never be construed to authorize Congress to prevent the people of the Unites States who are peaceful citizens from keeping their own arms.

Samuel Adams
U.S. Constitutional Convention, 1788