

## Democracy is falling off the Edge

Written by Bruce Enberg

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From the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals, "... consumers, of course, have options, They can go to another broadband provider if they want to reach particular edge providers or if their connections to particular edge providers have been degraded." Replace the term 'edge providers' with 'liberal media', and you get what this is all about. The three hard right corporate owners that control all the major markets can simply tell you what sort of material you can download from, or upload to internet. The phrase, "want to reach" means explicitly that they can block content at will.

The Court actually used the Libertarian rational that 'competition' will protect you. Good luck finding another broadband provider that won't also block the content that disagrees with their goals of a Neo-Feudalist America. Remember, they can block either end of the connection, if not outright, by pricing you out of business, and favoring those that they approve.

The entire problem stems from regulations issued by Bush appointees to the FCC in 2005. Side stepping the law they created two different classes of internet carrier. The large long distance traffic carriers remained as so-called 'common carriers' who must carry all content without discrimination. But, they created another class of carriers that provides the actual connection to your house or business. These companies control both ends of the internet connection and these carriers are called 'content providers'. Think of them like a cable company or a radio station, as of today they can tell you exactly what you'll see or hear over the internet. In fact the 'common carrier' and the 'content providers' are by and large the very same companies.

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The good news is that the FCC should be able to simply issue new regulations making the Court's ruling moot. Congress could at anytime amend the law to force internet neutrality. The Constitution is very clear about Congress having the power to "regulate Interstate commerce".

Remember this whole power grab is based on Bush appointees to the FCC (who are now gone) creating a fig leaf for the Fascists to hide behind.

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