Was It an April Fool Joke?

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U.S. control of the Internet's basic functions has kept the Web free for Americans and for the entire world. And it's up to us to keep it that way.

As Ronald Reagan said during the great Panama Canal controversy in the mid-1970s, "We bought it. We built it. We paid for it. We intend to keep it."

Within two years after the U.S. Senate ratified the treaty to give away our Canal, angry voters defeated two dozen Senators who voted for that treaty and induced eight more to retire. Reagan's triumphant 1980 victory over both the Democrats and the Republican Establishment included the support of a new Republican Senate.

Where is the Republican leader who is smart enough to follow Reagan's example and thereby pave a route to the White House? Where is a leader who will protect and defend America's control of the Web, which is such a prime example of America's technological exceptionalism?

President Obama tried to hide the news of his abandonment of our control of the Internet by having an Assistant Secretary in the Department of Commerce issue a low-key press release in those late Friday afternoon hours where embarrassing news is often buried. Was this an April Fool joke?

The U.S. created the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), and has kept control over the technical procedures that allow computers around the world to connect to Web addresses. ICANN has managed the Internet's Domain Name System since 1998, ensuring that the Internet runs efficiently without political pressure from any country.

Now the Obama Commerce Department wants to give ICANN away and even invite Communist China and Russia to help us police the Internet. That's like telling the fox to guard the chicken coop because those countries don't believe in free speech and don't even allow their own people to have free access to the Internet.

That could be the most dangerous use yet of Obama's now-famous pen. It's also a great opportunity for some Republican to stand up for America like Reagan did, and reap the political reward.

There has to be political capital lurking in a pro-America policy position that is already espoused by the Washington Post, the Wall Street Journal, the Heritage Foundation, and Bill Clinton. Clinton warns that other countries "have been trying to take this authority from the U.S. for the sole purpose of cracking down on internet freedom and limiting it and having governments protect their backsides instead of empowering their people."

Pundits can debate whether Obama had the constitutional right to give away our Internet power with the stroke of his pen, but there's no question about the constitutional authority of Congress to veto what he did because the Constitution plainly gives the Commerce power to Congress.

Unfortunately, giving away the Internet is another key part of Barack Obama's plan to diminish America's power and prestige in the world. He wants to spread around world power to our enemies as well as our friends, just as he seeks to spread the wealth around in our country.

Obama's defenders argue that his action is just part of a plan to support the "multi-stakeholder" model of Internet governance. That's a buzzword to conceal the argument to hide the transfer of real control of the Web to many countries, companies, UN and globalist groups, none of which respect our First Amendment right.

Rep. Anna Eshoo, the top Democrat on the House Communications and Technology Subcommittee, said "while the internet was a product of American genius, no government or intergovernmental organization should control its future." What nonsense! Of course America should control the valuable property that we built!

Some Democrats are whining that "stakeholders deserve" a voice and a role in the governance of the Internet. No, they don't. We built it; it's ours. And all stakeholders and countries are better off if the U.S. controls the Web rather than foreign or United Nations globalists who did nothing to build the Internet into such a valuable asset.

Among the many deceitful arguments used by the globalists is that taking the Internet away from the U.S. will advance us toward a goal of "no government control of the Internet." If the United States doesn't keep control of what we invented, the Internet will end up under Chinese or UN control.

And one more problem: for years the UN has searched for devious ways to tax individuals. Turning the ICANN domain-name system over to a bunch of global bureaucrats who did nothing to develop the Internet would give them an assortment of new ways to tax us.

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