



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on June 23, 2010

Joe Lieberman: Follow China's Lead on Internet

Senator Joseph Lieberman, the Democrat-turned-Independent Senator from Connecticut, told CNN's State of the Union program June 20 that the United States government needs to follow the lead of Internet censor Communist China on information technology security. "Right now, China, the government, can disconnect parts of its Internet in a case of war," Lieberman told CNN's Candy Crowley. "We need to have that here, too."



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1caZvxMUWk>

Crowley asked Lieberman about his [bill](#), "Protecting Cyberspace as a National Asset Act of 2010," and whether it involves a Presidential "kill-switch bill" for the Internet. Lieberman's full response was as follows:

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No way, and total misinformation. I don't know whether people are intentionally pedaling misinformation. Here is the fact. Cyber-war is going on in some sense right now. Our civilian infrastructure, the Internet that runs the electric grid, the telecommunications grid, transportation, all the rest is constantly being probed by nation states, by some terrorist groups, by organized criminal gangs.

And we need this capacity in a time of war. We need the capacity for the president to say, Internet service provider, we've got to disconnect the American Internet from all traffic coming in from another foreign country, or we've got to put a patch on this part of it.

The president will never take over — the government should never take over the Internet. Listen, we've consulted, Senator Collins and I, who are proposing this bill, with civil liberties and privacy experts. This is a matter of national security. A cyber attack on America can do as much or more damage today by incapacitating our banks, our communications, our finance, our transportation, as a conventional war attack.

And the president, in catastrophic cases — not going to do it every day, not going to take it over. So I say to my friends on the Internet, relax... (LAUGHTER) take a look at the bill. And this is something that we need to protect our country. *Right now, China, the government, can disconnect parts of its Internet in a case of war. We need to have that here, too.*[Emphasis added.]

The bill has garnered increased attention as Lieberman's bill would increase federal government control over the Internet. Indeed, despite the fact that Lieberman claimed that the bill involved a presidential "kill switch" was "total misinformation," by the end of his response alarm bells were ringing in the minds of alert citizens and civil libertarians that this was nothing like misinformation. The *New American's* Michael Tennant [reported](#) June 14 that "even if a cyber emergency is never declared, PCNAA still provides for a vast increase in the federal government's control over cyberspace."



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Moreover, the Federal Communications Commission [voted](#) 3-2 on June 17 to hold hearings to reclassify Internet broadband service as a telecommunications service. Up until now, Internet service alone — as opposed to cellphone service — has been designated as an information service and largely beyond the FCC's regulatory reach. (For more information on this FCC vote, see *The New American's* Dennis Behreandt [explain it](#) in greater detail here.)

Hat tip for this story: [Lew Rockwell's invaluable blog](#)

Photo of Senator Lieberman: AP Images



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