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Let?s ban the news

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Try getting the news in North Korea.

You won't get much news. You will get a lot of propaganda determined by the government about how great your life is, what a great country you live in, and how the dear leader is the greatest in the world.

It won't give any bad news, especially about government errors or corruption.

Media is highly controlled, internet access is highly restricted, and no media person in their right mind would write anything negative about the government because they would probably disappear pretty quickly.

North Koreans cannot access international news via the Internet. It's strictly controlled because they might be able to figure out what a screwed-up country they live in - that's not good for a government that wants to control everything its citizens do.

This is censorship in its extreme form.

Censorship is practiced in a lot of countries around the world to various degrees. You should be wary of, or dismiss, any news that is reported by an agency in which government has an interest.

I used to listen to Voice of America and Radio Free Europe, which broadcast on short-wave radio into Eastern Block countries. Even though it was state-sponsored radio, the reports were accurate about world affairs and designed to provide people in media-controlled countries with news of the world.

You can't block radio waves at the border. It was indeed anti-communist propaganda, however.

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, known as the CRTC, is considering banning the U.S.'s Fox News from Canadian cable packages. The CRTC received a complaint that one of the Fox News broadcasters made comments that could be considered ?hate speech.'

They are considering banning, in other words censoring, an entire network because of comments made by one person.

A lot of people don't like the FOX Network and News, to begin with. Apparently, they are considered biased. Well, yeah, you think? So is CNN, so is CBC, so are a lot of news outlets. We all know which major Canadian newspapers are considered ?right leaning' or ?left leaning' and file news reports with a biased slant.

I've never agreed with the ?hate speech' laws to begin with. The law is vague and open to wildly varying interpretations. The truth is, if hate speech laws were really enforced all the time, half the country would be in jail.

I hear hate speech in some form all the time. I still haven't called the police to report it. Even if I did, do you think some police officer is going to arrest your bowling buddy because he made a derogatory comment about some other group bowling on another lane?

The CRTC describes itself as ?an administrative tribunal that regulates and supervises broadcasting and telecommunications in the public interest.? It goes on to say that it ensures Canadians have access to world-class communication that ?promotes innovation and enrichestheir lives.?

I don't think there's much innovation on television unless you're watching a documentary that requests viewers to call in with ways to improve widget manufacturing.

I also question how it can ?enrich' your life all that much, other than providing something to watch on a screen rather than doing something productive.

I like Seinfeld and still enjoy watching it, and it is a wildly popular show, but no one's life would have been any different if the show was never produced.

If they are going to start censoring TV for hate speech, you're going to see a lot of TV shows pulled from the airwaves.

TV is filled with derogatory statements made in the guise of comedy or as opinions on various talk shows, news shows, or any other show where a group of people opine about the events of the week.

If you're easily offended, you probably shouldn't be watching The Big Bang Theory or The View, or a lot of other programs.

For now, I'm going to assume the CRTC will do the right thing. I hope they are considering a ban on FOX News only because as an institution, they are bound to investigate all complaints that cross their desk. It doesn't mean they have to follow through and eliminate programming based on the comments of one person.

As for censorship, I have devised a new way of eliminating offensive programming and avoiding hearing derogatory comments.

I turn the channel.