

Since its constitution,
it's section on media



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Since the internet's inception and widespread adoption, China has sought to control both what come into and out of the country by way of the world wide web. China's strict media controls usually involve the use of monitoring systems run by the government, firewalls systems that restrict certain websites, blacklisting certain publications, and jailing bloggers and journalists who they deem a " threat" to China's national security (1). Google's battle with the Chinese government over internet censorship and the Norwegian Nobel Committee's awarding of the 2010 Peace Prize to jailed Chinese activist Liu Xiaobo have also increased international attention to censorship issues.

(2) At the same time, the country's burgeoning economy relies on the web for growth, and experts say the growing need for internet freedom is testing the regime's control. (3) In this essay I will be studying the official media policies that China maintains, the methods through which the government enacts media control, and the effect that this control has upon the citizens of China. I will be doing this in order to understand whether or not China's current system of governance would be able to maintain control if they didn't censor Chinese media so heavily. So, what exactly is China's policy on media censorship? While freedom of speech and press is granted to the citizens of China within its constitution, it's section on media regulations allows authorities to censor news stories by claiming that they expose " state secrets" or threaten the safety of the country in some way (4). China's definition of state secrets continues to remain nebulous, which allows for censorship of any and all information that Chinese authorities might consider even remotely harmful to China's political and economic interests. CFR Senior

Fellow Elizabeth C. Economy says the Chinese government is in a state of “schizophrenia” about media policy as it “goes back and forth, testing the line, knowing they need press freedom and the information it provides, but worried about opening the door to the type of freedoms that could lead to the regime’s downfall.” (5) Because internet development has taken place entirely within the control of the Communist party over the last 20+ years, China has been able to develop what China’s internet czar, Lu Wei, calls, “a balance between freedom and order and openness and economy.

” He continued by saying that China is on a path of “cyber-governance with Chinese characteristics.” (6) The government issued in May 2010 its first white paper on the internet that focused on the concept of “internet sovereignty,” and required that every internet user in China, including foreign organizations and individuals, had to abide by Chinese laws and regulations. (7) These laws and regulations included a requirement that all Chinese internet companies are required to sign a “Public Pledge on Self-Regulation and Professional Ethics for China Internet Industry,” that encompasses more stringent rules than those within the whitepaper (8).

China’s General Secretary of the Communist Party Xi Jinping announced a new media policy in 2016 that outlined “All the work by the party’s media must reflect the party’s will, safeguard the party’s authority, and safeguard the party’s unity” and reemphasized China’s position that its state media must align themselves with the “thought, politics, and actions” of the party’s leadership. In doing so, Xi made a clear statement to the world that China sees its media as simply a tool for the Communist party to maintain control over what information can be introduced to its populous (9). A China

Daily essay emphasized Xi's policy, noting that " the nation's media outlets are essential to political stability," and It has been argued that China's communication system is a " key battleground for china's future."(10)