GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES (SHORT COURSE)   **1340/01**

Paper 1 Written paper   **October/November 2017**

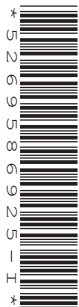INSERT (Resource Booklet)

                                                                   1 hour 30 minutes

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Resource Booklet contains Documents 1 and 2 which you should use to answer the questions.

You should spend approximately 10 minutes reading the documents before attempting to answer the questions. This is allowed for within the time set for the examination.

This document consists of **3** printed pages and **1** blank page.

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The documents below consider the regulation of the Internet. Read them **both** in order to answer **all** the questions on the question paper.

Document 1: adapted from *How the Internet could be regulated,* a presentation made by Roger Darlington. The author was the first Independent Chair of the Internet Watch Foundation, a body to combat illegal content on the Internet in the UK. The presentation was first made in 2006 but has been updated since.

It is my view that currently there is Internet content that would be regarded as harmful by most people but is not illegal in UK law. The industry needs to tackle such harmful content. This would allow the industry to be credible in then insisting that users have to protect themselves from further content which is not illegal or harmful, but is offensive.

Often when I introduce such a notion into the debate on Internet regulation, I am challenged by the question: How can you draw the line? My immediate response is that people are drawing the line every day in relation to whether and, if so how and when, one can hear, see, or read various forms of content, whether it be radio, television, films, newspapers and magazines.

The Internet is fundamentally just another communications network. If we regulate radio, television, and telecommunications networks, why don't we regulate the Net? The argument suggests that, not only is the Internet just another network, it is essentially becoming *the* network, so that if we do not regulate the Net at all, effectively over time we are going to abandon the notion of content regulation.

There is a range of problematic content on the Internet. There is illegal content such as child abuse images; harmful content relating to drug use and offensive content such as pornography. The argument goes that we cannot regulate these different forms of problematic content in the same way, but equally we cannot simply ignore them.

Therefore I propose in relation to Internet content that we consult bodies which already make judgements on content about the creation of an appropriate panel. I would suggest that we then create an independent panel of people with expertise in physical and psychological health that would draw up an agreed definition of harmful content and be available to judge whether material referred to them did or did not fall within this definition.

Once we have effective regulation for illegal and harmful content, we have to consider material which is offensive – sometimes grossly offensive – to certain users of the Internet. This is content which some users would rather not access or would rather that their children not access. However, identification of content as offensive is subjective and reflects the values of the user who must therefore exercise some responsibility for controlling access.

It is my view that, once we have proper arrangements for handling illegal and harmful content, it is reasonable and right to argue that users themselves have to exercise control in relation to material that they find offensive. We must, however, inform users of the techniques and the tools that they can use to exercise such control.

Document 2: adapted from *Regulating the Internet threatens entrepreneurial freedom* by Ted Cruz. The author is a Republican politician in the US. The article was published in the Washington Post in 2014.

Never before has it been so easy to turn an idea into a business. With a simple Internet connection, some ingenuity and a lot of hard work, anyone today can create a new service or app or start selling products nationwide. In the past, such a person would have to know the right people and raise substantial start-up capital to get a store running. Not anymore. The Internet is the great equalizer.

The next generation of Internet-connected devices, apps and services will generate trillions of dollars of global economic growth in the years ahead. And Americans are perfectly poised to take maximum advantage – if the government doesn't take those opportunities away in the form of crushing taxes, rules and regulations. The threats from the American government in Washington to stifle freedom, entrepreneurship and creativity online have never been greater.

To meet this threat, firstly, we must abandon the idea of further taxing Internet access and sales. At this moment, online retailers face an enormous threat because Washington may pass a massive new Internet sales tax. As the hashtag puts it, #NoNetTax. Such a tax would force online retailers to comply with every sales tax law in the country. This would force small online retailers to track sales, keep records and collect the taxes, or risk being penalized for noncompliance by governments over whom they have no control, and this is simply not fair. Congress should demonstrate its commitment to a free, thriving Internet by making permanent the ban on imposing any additional taxes on Internet access, originally signed into law by President Bill Clinton.

Secondly, we should dismiss all plans to give nations hostile to human rights and democracy more influence over Internet policy. The likes of Russian President Vladimir Putin, Iran's Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and Chinese President Xi Jinping should not dictate what can be read, written, distributed, bought and sold on the Internet. Countries that do not give their own people the right to speak freely deserve no say in what Americans can say and do on the Internet.

Thirdly, we must promote growth in the technological sector, a consistent bright spot for the US economy. But we won't realize more of that dynamic growth unless we keep the Internet free from the kind of unnecessary regulation that is strangling our health-care, energy and banking industries.

President Obama came out aggressively for turning the Internet into a public utility, like water supplies. Some in the online community have embraced this call, thinking cheaper prices would result. But when has that worked? Government-regulated utilities invariably destroy innovation and freedom.

We don't leave our constitutional rights behind when we go online. The same commitment to the principles of liberty that made the United States the greatest economic superpower the world has ever seen must prevail in the virtual world as well. Freedom allows social mobility, and the Internet is a haven for entrepreneurial freedom. Call it the American Dream 2.0. We should make a commitment, right now, to keep it that way.

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