

A Declaration

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A Declaration

A Declaration of the _____ Proper Noun _____ of Cyberspace

BY JOHN PERRY BARLOW

Governments of the _____ Pronoun _____ World, you _____ Noun _____ giants of flesh and _____ Verb - Non 3rd Person _____

_____ Singular Present _____, I come from Cyberspace, the new home of _____ Noun _____. On behalf of the future, I ask you of the past to leave us alone. You are not welcome among us. You have no sovereignty where we gather.

We have no elected government, nor are we likely to have one, so I address you with no greater authority than that with which _____ Noun _____ itself always speaks. I declare the global social space we are building to be naturally independent of the tyrannies you seek to impose on us. You have no _____ Noun _____ right to rule us nor do you possess any methods of enforcement we have true reason to _____ Verb - Base Form _____.

Governments derive their just powers from the _____ Verb - Base Form _____ of the governed. You have neither _____ Verb - Past Participle _____ nor _____ Verb - Past Participle _____ ours. We did not _____ Verb _____ you. You do not _____ Verb _____ us, nor do you _____ Verb _____ our world. Cyberspace does not lie within your borders. Do not think that you can build it, as though it were a public _____ Noun _____ project. You _____ Modal _____. It is an act of _____ Noun _____ and it grows itself through our _____ Adjective _____ _____ Noun - Plural _____.

You

have not engaged in our great and _____ *Coordinating conjunction* _____ *Coordinating conjunction* _____, nor did you create the wealth of our marketplaces. You do not know our culture, our _____ *Noun - Plural* _____, or the _____ *Adjective* _____ codes that already _____ *Verb - Non 3rd Person Singular Present* _____ our society more _____ *Noun* _____ than could be obtained by any of your impositions.

You _____ *Verb - Non 3rd Person Singular Present* _____ there are problems among us that you need to solve. You use this _____ *Noun* _____ as an excuse to invade our precincts. Many of these problems don't exist. Where there are real conflicts, where there are wrongs, we will identify them and address them by our means. We are _____ *Verb - Present Tense* _____ our own Social Contract. This governance will _____ *Verb* _____ according to the conditions of our world, not yours. Our world is _____ *Adjective* _____.

Cyberspace _____ *Noun - Plural* _____ of _____ *Noun - Plural* _____, _____ *Coordinating conjunction* _____, and thought itself, _____ *Determiner* _____ like a standing wave in the web of our communications. Ours is a _____ *Noun* _____ that is both everywhere and _____ *Adverb* _____, but it is not where bodies live.

We are creating a _____ *Determiner* _____ that all may enter without privilege or prejudice accorded by race, economic power, military force, or station of birth.

We are creating a world where _____ *Verb* _____, anywhere may express his or her _____ *Adverb* _____, no matter how _____ *Preposition or subordinating conjunction* _____,

without fear of _____ Coordinating conjunction _____ coerced into silence or conformity.

Your legal concepts of property, expression, identity, _____ Verb _____, and context do not apply to us. They are all based on matter, and there is no _____ Noun _____ here.

Our identities _____ Noun - Plural _____ no bodies, so, unlike you, we cannot obtain order by physical coercion. We _____ Verb - Non 3rd Person Singular Present _____ that from ethics, _____ Verb - Past Tense _____ self-interest, and the _____ Noun _____, our governance will emerge. Our identities may be distributed across many of your jurisdictions. The only law that all our constituent cultures would generally _____ Verb _____ is the Golden Rule. We _____ Verb - Non 3rd Person Singular Present _____ we will be able to build our particular solutions on that _____ Noun _____. But we cannot accept the solutions you are attempting to impose.

In the United States, you have today created a law, the Telecommunications Reform Act, which repudiates your own Constitution and insults the dreams of Jefferson, Washington, Mill, Madison, DeToqueville, and Brandeis. These dreams must now be born anew in us.

You are terrified of your own children, since they are natives in a world where you will always be immigrants. Because you fear them, you entrust your bureaucracies with the parental responsibilities you are too cowardly to confront yourselves. In our world, all the sentiments and expressions of humanity, from the debasing to the angelic,

are parts of a seamless whole, the global conversation of bits. We cannot separate the air that chokes from the air upon which wings beat.

In China, Germany, France, Russia, Singapore, Italy and the United States, you are trying to ward off the virus of liberty by erecting guard posts at the frontiers of Cyberspace. These may keep out the contagion for a small time, but they will not work in a world that will soon be blanketed in bit-bearing media.

Your increasingly obsolete information industries would perpetuate themselves by proposing laws, in America and elsewhere, that claim to own speech itself throughout the world. These laws would declare ideas to be another industrial product, no more noble than pig iron. In our world, whatever the human mind may create can be reproduced and distributed infinitely at no cost. The global conveyance of thought no longer requires your factories to accomplish.

These increasingly hostile and colonial measures place us in the same position as those previous lovers of freedom and self-determination who had to reject the authorities of distant, uninformed powers. We must declare our virtual selves immune to your sovereignty, even as we continue to consent to your rule over our bodies. We will spread ourselves across the Planet so that no one can arrest our thoughts.

We will create a civilization of the Mind in Cyberspace. May it be more humane and fair than the world your governments

have made before.

Davos, Switzerland

February 8, 1996