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# Government Censorship As a Prominent Issue in China

## Great Firewall of China

Government censorship has always been prominent in China. With the new growing age in technology, governments are frantically trying to approach methods to either allow the growth of Internet freedom or to completely censor and control this flow of information. In the United States, net neutrality has always been a controversial topic of interest. The Internet is a difficult medium to control and the various amounts of information that flows throughout this medium can be dangerous to various groups, governments, and establishments. In response, China has constructed as what is called as the Great Firewall (????, fáng hu? cháng chéng). This firewall is designed to censor most foreign internet traffic from being accessed domestically. This in turn, forces Internet traffic to occur domestically, which can be much easier to maintain and control for the Communist Party in China. The Great Firewall of China has most definitely caused many different impacts in the world including the limitation of civil rights, the increase of domestic-oriented technology companies, and harming foreign commerce.

The Great Firewall provides a great limitation for Chinese citizens by limiting their civil rights. The Communist Party of China always had a few issues with allowing the masses to preserve their basic civil rights. These rights include the freedom of speech, assembly, press and religion. Due to the nature of the Communist Party, allowing these freedoms to seep through for the masses would be completely devastating to their established powers. In a sense, the Internet is a harmful place for the Communist Party of China, and could greatly harm their powers if enough of the native Chinese people were to obtain and see it. Many of the Chinese citizens do not realize the sheer corruption that governs them, and if they were to be exposed to the material of western media through the Internet, the public would become unstable and violence would occur to mitigate these rights. The Great Firewall is designed to prevent this inevitable occurrence and also censors and prevents these basic civil rights to be practiced by the Chinese people. The Internet has always provided to be a great medium, it is essentially a voice for those without a voice, henceforth, autocratic government establishments like China, must be able to censor and make sure this material is not given to its people.

The Great Firewall has promoted the increase of domestic-oriented technology companies to arise in China. The Internet in China seems a lot more different than the Internet in the western world, where Internet freedom is given to the people. Sites like Google, Facebook, and Twitter that are highly praised in the United States for being modern, innovative technologies for the modern era of technology, are not as prominent and well known in China. In fact, because of the Great Firewall, these websites are completely blocked and censored from the people in China. From an outsider's perspective, this seems as of a great loss for the avid Internet users in China, as Google and Facebook are so integrated in many people's lives in the western world. However, this has not impacted Chinese people's lives as significantly one would think. This ban has completely mitigated and eliminated competition on a foreign scale. Domestic companies like Tencent and Sina have utilized this availability of interest and have made social networks that are widely used domestically in China. Sites like Sina Weibo, QQ, and Renren have been vastly used by the people as their social network medium. The Great Firewall may have censored foreign material like Google and Facebook, however, this has not left people in a

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technological ditch and has allowed them other sources of networking to thrive domestically in China.

The arrival of the Great Firewall has harmed foreign trade and business relationships with China. China has prevented and harmed a lot of U.S. media businesses from thriving and reporting journalistic work in China. Places like Tibet are highly underrepresented in terms of international media due to the government's persistence to censor and block material. This has caused for numerous negative repercussions for these media outlets as they can face some deep financial problems with the Chinese government. Media companies are not the only groups harmed by such provisions, many high-scale businesses face similar financial risks when wanting to assess their business in China. Apple for example invested large amounts of money that allowed for several applications that would be able to circumvent the Great Firewall, however, this was not idealistic for the government. Due to this provision, the government provided Apple with an ultimatum, they either remove such given material if they want to practice and establish business in China, or be completely removed from the market economy. This has caused for China to be a major financial risk to invest in for businesses and allows absolutely no success for these individual businesses.

The Great Firewall has been implemented to block and censor the Chinese masses to implement vast information that the Internet provides. This implementation taken in effect for over 10 years has not only impacted people on a domestic scale but also on a foreign scale. People in China do not get to enjoy their basic civil rights, their sense of the Internet is highly censored which prevents them to express their own opinions and views, while also viewing other aspects of the world. Domestic businesses have thrived due to the provisions of the Great Firewall, and have provided a superlative amount of copies of American technologies that are available for use for the Chinese people. The Great Firewall has also created a deep financial risk for companies and businesses that plan to invest in China. The combination of these many factors that Great Firewall has caused has proven to be effective at maintaining control of both the people domestically and people in a foreign manner.