How To Make A Bomb

If you guessed that I made this page as a direct response to the recent Senate vote in favor of outlawing bomb-making data on the Internet, you're right. Would I love to defend my freedom of speech in writing this page in court? You bet.

Before I get to the part about the bomb, I want to go on the record saying why the proposed law is stupid. Three words: The First Amendment. Restricting speech based on content flies in the face of the freedom of expression on which this country is founded. The right answer to speech you don't like is to speak against it.

Of course, the folks who wrote the constitution never imagined the Internet or probably the efficacy of explosives that people can create today. But they understood that any cause will serve a tyrant. If you give the government the right to prevent you from saying something, pretty soon anyone who doesn't agree with the government is saying that thing. Imagine if shutting Martin Luther King up had been as easy as linking his page and a bomb-making page together.

Even if you believe that bomb-making information is inherently evil, the act is a dumb one. The information required to make things go boom is relatively simple. In fact, a good high school chemistry text should be more than adequate to get an intrepid bomb-maker started. And should you need more recipe-like instructions, I'm sure that the U. S. Army manuals found in your local Army/Navy store are a fine addition to a bomb-maker's library. The information required to make a bomb is easy to come by through many means. Restricting the Internet publication of such materials is either useless posturing or a stepping stone to attack the other protected publications. Salt those options to the taste of your level of paranoia.

And even if you believe that bomb-making information should be regulated on the Internet, it's probably impossible. More and more of the Internet is based in countries over which the U. S. Congress can only enact regulation by force of arms. While I find the notion of bombing France over their Internet content whimsical, I also think it's unlikely. The bottom line is that the Senate is in no position to regulate Internet content unless they want to restrict the net to be a USA-only structure.

So, I suppose that I should put out that bomb recipe now:

- Get an egotistical star to both write and direct, the more petulant the better.

- Expensive, difficult-to-film sets are a must. Ideally try for something like a flying city.

- Expensive locations help, too, the more exotic the better. Don't run the risk of just disease or just bureaucracy, pick somewhere both are common. Consider the former Yugoslavia.

- All these preparations are for naught if there's a good script and actual acting. Have the script rewritten several times, by screenwriters with a mutual dislike, if possible. Consider the *Showgirls* team.

- Make sure that your director and producer can't stand each other, but can't leave the project either. One or the other might fail to sabotage the project, but it'll be tough to get it past both.

- Don't neglect marketing. The next two *Star Wars* films will be coming out soon; be sure to open the same weekend as one of them.

Did I mention that content is hard to regulate because people can use the same words to mean different things?