

NRA – America's 1st Freedom

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STANDING GUARD

By Wayne LaPierre, NRA Executive Vice President

Silencing The First Amendment

One of the radical ideological appointees embedded in the Obama political machine is a man with a dream for the First Amendment. His name is Mark Lloyd, and as Obama's "Diversity Czar" at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), he plans to wield immense power over the way Americans can communicate.



In his vision, a day would come when talk radio would be replaced with government-approved "progressive" local radio and by a smothering National People's Radio.

In his vision ... Rush Limbaugh would be gone. Glenn Beck, gone. Lou Dobbs, off the air. Sean Hannity, silenced. Laura Ingraham, history. The networks and satellite broadcasters that now carry those broadcasts would be broken up, and their affiliate stations "delicensed," replaced by "local" licensees—all in the name of diversity.

Free choice would be dead, as would the free flow of ideas. At the same time, government radio would be bloated with funds taken as punitive license fees from remaining commercial broadcasters. In the Orwellian name of "diversity," censorship will reign.

It is Katrina for the First Amendment.

Well before President Obama began packing the federal bureaucracies with his personal "czars," I warned of the influence of the George Soros-bankrolled Center for American Progress (CAP).

The man who heads that far-left think tank, John Podesta, ran Obama's post-election transition team and was key to filling positions in the Obama Chicago-style federal machine. As White House chief of staff, he was one of Bill Clinton's hatchet men on federal gun control.

Among the most critical targets for Podesta's transition was the Federal Communications Commission. His most important appointee to the FCC was Mark Lloyd, who as a CAP fellow, authored a George Soros-financed war plan to kill talk radio.

In his powerful FCC post, Lloyd is shaping the critical components of the Obama administration's backdoor censorship of electronic and digital communications. He is doing it through the "regulatory" process—outside any specific congressional authority. FCC has the power to determine who gets broadcast licenses and who is barred. Political misuse of that power is the key.

In terms of the sanctity of the Constitutional right of free speech as we know it today, Lloyd's views are scary. In his 2006 book, "Prologue to a Farce: Communication and Democracy in America," he wrote:

"It should be clear ... that my focus here is not freedom of speech or the press. This freedom is all too often an exaggeration. At the very least, blind references to freedom of speech or the press serve as a distraction from the critical examination of other communications policies."

In Lloyd's worldview and from his prism of intolerance, "[T]he purpose of free speech is warped to protect global corporations and block rules that would promote democratic governance."

Lloyd's 2007 declaration of war against broadcast free speech, "The Structural Imbalance of Political Talk Radio," came under scathing criticism from many true free speech advocates, including the NRA. But keep in mind that with this administration, criticism is always treated as nothing more than a "distraction" from the relentless agenda.

Lloyd's attack on commercial talk-radio calls for a redistribution of broadcast licenses—taking them from commercial broadcasters carrying hugely successful commentators and giving those licenses to local "progressives," who otherwise would have no audience at all. Lloyd whined about the fact that left-wing Air America Radio drew audiences in "progressive" metropolitan areas that were so small as to be unmeasurable. Talkers like Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity in those same cities garnered huge audiences. For Lloyd, market share is a myth.

With that as evidence, Lloyd declared, "... that conservative talk radio dominates the airwaves of our country to the detriment of informed public discourse and the First Amendment."

Got that? The free market of ideas—where individual Americans choose with their radio dials—exists "to the detriment of the First Amendment."

Condemning what he calls the "power of right-wing talk radio and their echo chambers in the conservative blogosphere," Lloyd has demanded that commercial broadcasters "... should pay to support public broadcasters who will operate on behalf of the local community... We want either clear rules that promote these First Amendment values or a reasonable payment to the public for the use of its property." According to CNSNews.com, "reasonable payment" amounts to "... a sum equal to their (commercial broad-casters) total operating costs."

With Lloyd empowered as "Diversity Czar" at the FCC—and Soros ultimately pulling the strings—this effort in the coming months to turn radical anti-First Amendment theory into public policy will move at a rapid pace. It will be merely one part of a flood of "Change" aimed at silencing any political opposition at any cost, especially my voice and your voice.

As freedom-loving Americans, we, the people, must put our members of Congress on notice. Stop the FCC's backdoor attempt to choke off talk radio. And protect the Internet. As Benjamin Franklin put it: "Whoever would overthrow the liberty of a nation must begin by subduing the freeness of speech." We must not let that happen—not today—not ever.