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THE AMERICAN RADIO FREE SPEECH FOUNDATION

Don't Touch My Dial!

Over the last weekend more than two dozen of the nation's top talk shows and media outlets held an unprecedented private meeting to brainstorm strategies against what they agreed are government plans to squelch First Amendment rights (see also [The American Radio Free Speech Foundation](#)).

Organized by Brad O'Leary, author of the new book, "Shut Up, America! The End of Free Speech" and Joseph Farah, editor and chief executive officer of World Net Daily ([www.wnd.com](#)), the group chose a spokesman and chairman of the coalition - Radio America syndicated host Roger Hedgecock of San Diego, CA. Other members of the group included nationally syndicated radio hosts Lars Larson ([www.larslarson.com](#)), Rusty Humphries ([www.talk2rusty.com](#)), Rev. Jesse Lee Peterson ([www.bondaction.org](#)), Steve Gill ([www.gillreport.com](#)) and local hosts Martha Zoller ([www.marthazoller.com](#)), Joyce Kaufman ([www.joycekaufman.com](#)) and Kirby Wilbur ([www.kvi.com/onair/kirby](#)).

The Coalition, legally formed as The American Radio Free Speech Foundation, has created a public awareness campaign and educational initiative-- "Don't Touch My Dial" ([www.donttouchmydial.com](#)).

The Nation faces an insidious attack on its First Amendment Rights that is being cloaked in legislation and regulation evidenced by the recently circulated draft FCC regulations (first proposed in February, 2008) to impose "localism" and "media ownership diversity" on talk radio.

In addition, under the guise of "cyberspace security", Senators Rockefeller, Snowe, and Nelson have introduced S773 which would, critics say, give the federal government control over the internet including, under emergency conditions, the right of the President to shut down the whole internet or sites on it, including the interruption of email.

When the public is informed about what is happening behind the scenes to threaten their First Amendment rights, they will be outraged. As shown in a recent poll that was commissioned by the coalition and is part of the "Zogby/O'Leary Report's First 100 Days Poll" when 3,937 voters from the last election were asked: "Four members of the U.S. Senate recently introduced a bill that would allow the President of the United States to turn off the internet nationally in the event of an emergency, however the Bill does not DEFINE what constitutes an emergency. Do you support or oppose this bill?" 81.8 % said they would oppose the bill and 5% said they would support it.

"The assault on the First Amendment that is being planned by the Government and the extremist Left is not limited to their desire to silence conservative talk radio," Hedgecock noted.

"Newspapers and Television are not immune to the anti-First Amendment efforts that are at work here. In addition, the internet is also a target for receiving the restrictive aspects of the so-called "fairness doctrine" as a means of stifling criticism for anything that is being reported or commented upon. Apparently the Administration wishes to silence any avenue from which the truth can escape the yoke of government tyranny."

Hedgecock commented further, "This issue -- and the urgent need for a broad-based, aggressive coalition to fight back -- is much bigger than talk radio, and much more dangerous than an effort to simply silence a few voices that the current Administration dislikes. This fight is a First Amendment fight and one that every American must be involved with, which is why we have created 'Don't Touch My Dial' as a vehicle for mass participation."

Hedgecock is also the Chairman and Spokesperson for Unfair Air (www.unfairair.org), Radio America's Free Radio Coalition to protect First Amendment Rights as they pertain to radio and radio audiences. Unfair Air is a member of the new broader based Coalition and will actively participate in the "Don't Touch My Dial" campaign.

Hedgecock is an exclusive columnist for World Net Daily (www.wnd.com) and the author of the recently published three book series: The 2008 Conservative Voter's Field Guide to: #1- Immigration, #2- The War and #3 - Healthcare (www.amazon.com). He is also a frequent guest on Hannity & Colmes, The O'Reilly Factor and other Fox News Channel Shows, on CNN's Lou Dobbs Show and on MSNBC. He was also the preferred guest host on The Rush Limbaugh Show for over a decade.

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For more information on Radio America visit www.radioamerica.org

For more information on "Don't Touch My Dial" visit www.donttouchmydial.com

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This article was prepared by Law & Health Weekly editors from staff and other reports.