
IS FREE SPEECH IN JEOPARDY?

The following is excerpted from "Is there a sinister plot to squelch talk radio?" *WorldNetdaily* (2/3/09).

FAIRNESS DOCTRINE: WILL IT RETURN?

Despite the absence of any action pending to re-enact the so called Fairness Doctrine, congressional Republicans have nonetheless introduced legislation to prevent its passage, insisting that Democrats are advancing a quiet agenda to silence conservative talk radio. Whether Americans realize it or not, say Republican lawmakers, "*Free speech is under attack.*" In 1949 the Federal Communications Commission adopted a policy that required broadcasters to devote airtime to the public interest and to air opposing viewpoints when discussing political and certain other issues. The FCC abandoned the policy in 1987, paving the way to explode from 150 stations nationwide to more than 3,000. Former broadcaster Rep. Mike Pence, R-Ind., however, sees the policy as an attack on First Amendment rights. "Bringing back the Fairness Doctrine would amount to government control over political views expressed on the public airwaves." Pence is one of the 200 Republican legislators to have co-sponsored the Broadcasters Act of 2009, denoted as H.R. 226 in the House of Representatives and S 34 in the Senate. It seeks to permanently ban the federal government from reinstating the Fairness Doctrine. It is not the first time Pence has rallied Congress to his cause. In 2007, Pence sponsored an amendment in the U.S. House, which passed by a wide margin and placed a one year ban on the Fairness Doctrine. Rep. David Obey, D - Wis. denied Democrats were trying to resurrect the policy saying, "That's a completely made-up issue."

THERE IS CAUSE FOR CONCERN. Recent developments, however, have led congressional Republicans to believe that they have already begun stealthily slipping the Fairness Doctrine back onto the table. "*Freedom of speech is under attack in this country,*" said Sen. Jim DeMint, R - SC, sponsor of the Senate version of the Broadcaster Freedom Act of 2009. "And there's no place that it's more visible and easy to see than this idea of the Fairness Doctrine, which several Democratic leaders have mentioned should be brought back." In a joint press conference with DeMint and other co-sponsors of the Act, Pence added, "While believe that it would be possible to see legislation move in this regard - and there are leading Democrats that control majorities in the House and Senate that have expressed an open interest in doing

that - we want to take the power from a future administration to do this by the promulgation of [such a] regulation."

LEADING DEMOCRATS ENDORSE THE IDEA.

The Republicans are citing comments made by prominent Democrats to the press by John Kerry, D - Mass, who told WYNC's Bryan Lehrer Show in 2007, "I think the Fairness Doctrine ought to be there and I also think equal time should come back." *In June of last year, John Gizza reported in Human Events a conversation with Nancy Pelosi, D - Calif., in which he asked her if she personally supported the Fairness Doctrine.* "Yes," Pelosi answered. *When Gizza pressed her further on whether she would permit a vote on the Broadcasters Act, she answered, "No... the interest in my caucus is the reverse."* As recently as December, Rep. Anna Echo, D - Calif. - who serves on the Telecommunications and Internet Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce - told the Palo Alto Daily Post she still believes in the Fairness Doctrine and will work to bring it back... Obama's press secretary told Broadcaster during the presidential election campaign, "Sen. Obama does not support reinstatement of the Fairness Doctrine..." However, DeMint answered a reporter's question, "There are a lot of promises made during an election that are not kept. We want to make sure the American people are aware that this threat is there. Obama's words last week did little to reassure Republicans of his viewpoint on the issue when the president told GOP leaders they need to quit listening to radio talk king Rush Limbaugh. "You can't just listen to Rush Limbaugh and get things done," Obama said.

BEWARE DEVIIOUS TACTICS BY DEMOCRATS.

FCC Commissioner Robert McDowell, a Bush appointee whose term runs through June however, warned that the Democrats may be adopting a stealthier approach to shut down conservatives on talk radio. In a speech to the news media in Washington last week, Multichannel News reports McDowell suggested there are efforts to implement the controversial policy without using the red-flagged Fairness Doctrine label. "That's just marketing 101," McDowell explained. "If your brand is controversial use another brand." *Instead, McDowell alleged, Democrats will try to disguise their efforts in the name of diversity or network neutrality.* At the press conference announcing the Broadcasters Freedom Act, Rep. Greg Walden, R - Ore., also warned the Democrats might try an "end run" to accomplish the

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same goal, only using the words “diversity” and “localism” instead of Fairness Doctrine. “What they are going to say is they want diversity of viewpoint on the airwaves.” A think tank headed by John Podesta, co-chairman of Obama’s transition team, mapped out a strategy... In June of 2007, Podesta’s Center for American Progress released a report titled, “The Structural Imbalance of Political Talk Radio,” detailing the conservative viewpoint’s dominance and proposing steps for leveling the playing field... *Since the report’s release in 2007, the Obama camp has twice gone on record supporting positions identical to Podesta’s think tank.* Further, the White House website lists on its technology agenda page that the President plans to “encourage diversity in the ownership of broadcast media, promote the development of media outlets for expression of diverse viewpoints... *The president’s position and proposals match the language of his transition co-chair’s report almost word-for-word.* Jim DeMint added, “If you look at what the Democrats have tried to do with Internet, they are starting to say this is a public entity, everyone has to be treated equally... You see traditional ideas being called ‘hate speech.’ *Everywhere, we see the Democrats inching in on free speech...Americans need to see that free speech in under attack.*” Ed. Italics mine.

IT IS TIME FOR CHRISTIANS TO WAKE UP!

Friends, need I remind you that we are in the last days. We are told that **“In the last days perilous times shall come...”** ~II Timothy 3:1-5. The Fairness Doctrine is only one attack on free speech. Though for some reason the people vote liberals into power, the general population is not basically liberal in their beliefs (I think I know why that is so). For example, the liberals put a lot of time, money and effort into establishing a talk show with their viewpoint and to answer the conservatives, but it was a miserable failure for they could not get any real hearing and shut it down within a year. Not only is there the Fairness Doctrine approach to silence the conservative philosophy, but there is also “hate crimes” legislation (which is already being used against Christians in other lands). I believe most Christians think it can’t happen here, but they are mistaken. Of course, the United Nations wants to make this sort of thing universal and already has such regulations on their books for nations to adopt - some already have. There is strong sentiment to silence all

who do not adhere to the liberal viewpoint. Of course, it does sound good to many, but then the majority of people do not usually think seriously about these things. They are mostly interested in getting along in this world. We are reminded: **“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man but the end thereof are the ways of death.”** ~Proverbs 14:12, 16:25.

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