



this issue:

Mark Lloyd, Associate General
Counsel and Chief Diversity
Officer, U.S. Federal
Communications Commission

Lloyd's Background

Vice President for Strategic
Initiatives, Leadership Conference
on Civil Rights

Senior Fellow, Communications
Policy, Center for American
Progress

Visiting scholar, MIT

Executive director, Civil Rights
Forum on Communications Policy

General Counsel, Benton
Foundation

Reporter and Producer, NBC and
CNN

EDUCATION

University of Michigan

Georgetown University Law
Center

Who is Mark Lloyd?

On August 4, 2009, Mark Lloyd was appointed to be Associate General Counsel and Chief Diversity Officer of the U.S. Federal Communications Commission.

He thinks that conservatives have made a concerted effort to stifle the liberal presence in media. He made the following statements at the National Conference for Media Reform in 2008.

"About maybe fifteen years at most, maybe fifteen years, that there was really, sort of, an effective

regime that really allowed local communities to hold local radio stations and television stations accountable. It has been gone now for, you know, over twenty years."

"Amazing social change. So we see social change on one end, where we see, essentially, a

Fairness Doctrine through other means...

movement [the peace and civil rights movements of the 1960's], putting those rules in place."

"Lloyd's idea about censoring content on talk radio because he doesn't like the political ideology espoused is incredibly dangerous and runs directly counter to the freedoms of the press guaranteed in the First Amendment."

*-Bill Wilson, President,
Americans for Limited
Government*

"And then another movement that destroyed those rules around the mid 1980's. And it was a very purposeful movement because folks who were conservatives both in the Democratic Party and the Republican Party had decided that a lot of pointy headed liberals had really, sort of, gone too far, and that they really could no longer, frankly, trust what was happening at NBC or CBS

or ABC, or the other stations, or what was happening in local markets. And so they began to do things like eliminate ascertainment rules; they began to extend license terms for stations. Very clear, very purposeful. And in addition to changing the rules – very deliberately changing the rules – under the Reagan administration

What you really need to know about Mark Lloyd

they also did something else. They began buying up stations. Very early on, the first sort of note about this, really for me, at least when I was at CNN was what happened at CBS.”

“They closed bureaus down all around the world, CBS did.” Fn.1.

His essay written for the Leadership Conference of Civil Rights in 1998 makes a similar statement: “But now, the great progress made by the civil rights communities in the communications policy arena has been rolled back. The Reagan-dominated FCC destroyed the ascertainment process, arguing that it was too much of an administrative burden on the stations and on the FCC.” Fn.2. He also says that national attention in the 1950’s was focused on “imagined internal and external threats posed by communism.” *Id.*

In a 2007 report released by the Center for American Progress, which he co-authored, called, “The Structural Imbalance of Political Talk Radio,” it is argued that the conservative dominance of this medium stems not from the free market, but from deliberate control by media moguls: “The disparities between conservative and progressive programming reflect the absence of localism in American radio markets. This shortfall results from the consolidation of ownership in radio stations and the corresponding dominance of syndicated programming operating in economies of scale that do not match the local needs of all communities.” Fn.3. Proposed solutions to this problem are as follows:

- Restore local and national caps on the ownership of commercial radio stations.
- Ensure greater local accountability over radio licensing.
- Require commercial owners who fail to abide by enforceable public interest obligations to pay a fee to support public broadcasting. *Id.*

These proposals are in keeping with Lloyd’s ideas expressed elsewhere. He doesn’t believe in the official reinstatement of the Fairness Doctrine, but using available legal tactics to bring about the same results, including having the Justice Department sue media corporations on anti-trust grounds, and encouraging local licensing challenges. Fn.4., Fn.5.

In the aforementioned panel on Media Reform Mark Lloyd also made some ambiguous comments about Hugo Chavez and his regime in Venezuela. After having spoken about the use of radio as a propaganda tool by the state in Rwanda during the conflict between the Tutsis and the Hutus, he continued in this vein: **“In Venezuela Chavez really had an incredible revolution, a democratic revolution, to begin to put in place things that were going to have an impact on the people in Venezuela.** The property owners and the folks who were then controlling the media in Venezuela rebelled worked, frankly, with folks here in the U.S. government, worked to oust him, but he came back in another revolution. And then Chavez began to take very seriously media in his country. And we’ve had complaints about this ever since.” (Emphasis added.) Fn.6.

Sources for further reading:

Fn.1. Audio file. Panel, *Media Reform and Social Change*, at the National Conference for Media Reform 2008, June 7, 2008. Available online at <http://freepress.net/node/39054> (Accessed September 28, 2009.)

Fn.2. Mark Lloyd, *Communications Policy is a Civil Rights Issue*, COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY CENTER REVIEW, Winter-Spring 1998. Available online at: <http://www.comtechreview.org/winter-spring-1998/r981lloy.htm>. (Accessed September 28, 2009.)

Fn.3. Mark Lloyd, et al, *The Structural Imbalance of Political Talk Radio*, Center For American Progress, June 20, 2007. Available online at: http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2007/06/talk_radio.html. (Accessed September 28, 2009.)

Fn.4. Mark Lloyd, *Media Maneuvers: Why the Rush to Waive Cross-Ownership Ban?*, Center for American Progress, December 5, 2007. Available online at: http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2007/12/media_maneuvers.html. (Accessed September 28, 2009.)

Fn.5. Mark Lloyd, *Forget the Fairness Doctrine*, Center for American Progress, July 24, 2007. Available online at: http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2007/07/lloyd_fairness.html. (Accessed September 28, 2009.)

Fn.6. See Fn.1, *supra*.

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