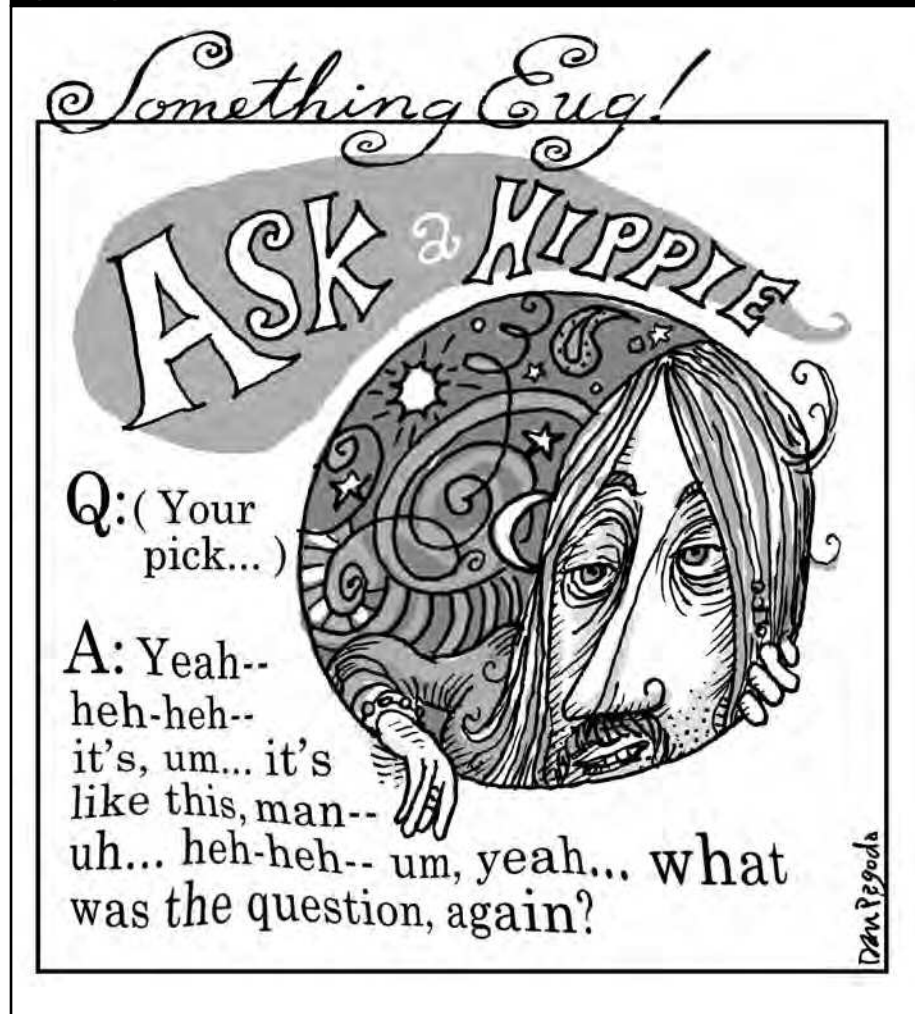




erty means tyranny. Government wage rates are an average of 40 percent than the private sector; their benefits; 60 percent higher than the private sector.

Schools: There are two-year waiting lines for children to attend private schools. Most people do not want their children to attend government schools. What happened to the rights of those have a different view of what is right for their own children? You sound like another “glue-sniffer,” socialist/communist for government tyranny, which is the major form of greed and selfishness, not the “kicker-refund” people.

*Fred Starkey
Springfield*

NATIVE ALIEN

I just became aware that illegal aliens can get driver’s licenses, live, work, anywhere in the U.S., and get over the borders easily, while I, a native born American, can no longer travel from one state to another with American driver’s ID that is only a few months too old. Oh, even though I have Medicare cards, health insurance benefit cards, local bank accounts and Visa debit cards.

Amazingly, only a few years ago, in a major U.S. city, foreign students on expired visas, whom I lived with, had jobs, and immigration never looked for them. They disappeared into America. I need to learn from my foreign alien friends, I guess, because now I am the foreign outsider in my own land.

*D.H. Bucher
Eugene*

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Whither Progressive Talk?

The demise of a partisan, local voice

If you listened to KOPT-AM, “Oregon’s Progressive Talk” radio, at 5:30 am on a recent weekend, you would have been shocked.

On our local Air America Radio affiliate – the home of Thom Hartmann, Randi Rhodes, Ed Schultz, and, formerly, Al Franken – a program was discussing how Republicans could win the presidential election, with analysis of the Iowa caucuses provided by the right-wing Republican, Club for Growth President Pat Toomey:

“It’s exciting to people that a black man is, ah, a viable contender and ... and arguably even the front runner. And frankly that’s gonna help him. Because there are a lotta people who are gonna wanna prove that a ... ah black American can be elected president of the United States, and so he’s gonna get support that he wouldn’t otherwise get. Um, he does appeal absolutely beyond the, you know, the ... the constituency of African-Americans, and that was a problem for previous black candidates, like Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson whose appeal didn’t extend beyond the extreme left wing of the Democratic Party and African-Americans.”

Yes, that’s right: A hard-core Republican actually knows how to say “Democratic Party” rather than sneer “Democrat Party.”

But, er ... why is this on at dawn Saturday and repeated Sunday every weekend ... on “Progressive Talk Radio”? I’ll tell you why at the end of this column.

KOPT-AM has announced that they have been sold to Oregon Public Broadcasting, and that the “sole owner,” Susan Arlie, is selling it, with other legal announcements on KOPT.

OPB sent a letter in late December to their subscribers stating: “OPB’s presence in Eugene is wholeheartedly supported by KLCC and Lane Community College ... OPB’s programming mix complements that of KLCC’s and we’re already working together to make sure Eugene residents have the greatest selection possible of quality public radio available.”

And they include a schedule of National Public Radio programs and BBC World Service news.

Significantly, there is no local content, there is no local programming and there is no “progressive” content, per se.

When KOPT began, we had two local hosts, Danuta Pfeiffer and Nancy Stapp, which in and of itself is an amazing thing to have happened in this age of “robot” stations (which is what OPB’s new KOPT will be) and mega-media companies. KOPT created local political community.

I don’t envy the husband of the “owner” of KOPT, John Musumeci, the alleged KOPT “man behind the curtain” and admitted Svengali of “The Gang of 9” (see EW July 12 and 19, 2001) at having set up KOPT “Oregon’s Progressive Talk.”

In the fall elections of 2006, his favorite (and the Gang of 9’s) candidate, Jim Torrey, went down to defeat at the hands of Vicki Walker, who was a regular guest on KOPT. And some of that defeat is certainly due to the progressive listeners of his own radio station.

This was what Clear Channel (big Bush backers) faced when their Air America Radio affiliates (including KLSD in San Diego, whose plug CC pulled in November) aided the disastrous (to the GOP) Democratic victories in the off-year elections in 2006.

There’s an old saying that a capitalist will sell you the rope to hang him with, and that seems to have been the case with “progressive” talk radio. Which, perhaps, gives “progressive” radio’s owners a good reason for pulling the plug. After all, modest profits from some prog talk stations don’t begin to counterbalance the real profits from Bushie tax cuts. Like they say in The Godfather: “It’s nothing personal; just business.”

Is this the reason? We don’t know. But KOPT’s being sold to OPB.

And the losers will be progressives. At best, public radio provides a “balanced” point of view, minus commercials. This doesn’t counterbalance the loss of a partisan voice and a local voice on the radio.

KOPT says that they’re in “talks” with other stations to take over the “progressive” format, but there is no guarantee. And, as far as the local progressive community? Kaput.

I’ve written at length about “American Radio Journal” on my blog: the Toomey association, Scaife funding, “charitable” budget and agenda. They’re not trying to hide their partisanship (only their “charitable” finances). Ideologically, they’re up front about “Lighting the Brushfires of Freedom.”

So why is the progressive-hating show on the air on Saturday and Sunday mornings on “Oregon’s Progressive Talk”?

Ask Mr. John Musumeci and his wife. I contacted the radio station twice, via e-mail, but they never replied.

Hart Williams is a Eugene blogger, political activist and former regular on KOPT. His blog has been featured on “Crooks & Liars.” For links to the blog postings referenced, go to hartwilliams.com and click the EW link.