

Boldly Deceptive: **Free Press's Extreme Agenda in Their Own Words**

An Americans for Prosperity Foundation Report
February 16, 2010

The so-called media reform group Free Press deceptively positions itself as a defender of our free press. In reality, they are for everything *but* a free press and are one of the nation's leading advocates for sweeping new government controls of our entire communications system: television, radio, newspapers, and the Internet. While claiming to be a consumer advocacy group presenting "bold, practical" policy recommendations, Free Press is actually motivated by an extremely deceptive left-wing ideology. They cleverly hide behind positive phrases like "free press," "neutrality," and "openness" to push a hidden agenda that seeks to destroy private ownership of all elements of our communications and media system. Their ultimate goal: Collectivizing our country's communications in all of its facets, with all of the attendant government control. On the following pages is the proof, in their own words:

Free Press on Capitalism

"...any serious effort to reform the media system would have to necessarily be part of a revolutionary program **to overthrow the capitalist system itself.**"

(Robert McChesney, "The U.S. Media Reform Movement," *Monthly Review*, <http://www.monthlyreview.org/080915mcchesney.php>, 9/2008)

"There is no real answer [to the U.S. economic crisis] **but to remove brick by brick the capitalist system itself, rebuilding the entire society on socialist principles.**"

(Robert W. McChesney and John Bellamy Foster, "A New New Deal under Obama?," *Monthly Review*, <http://www.monthlyreview.org/090201foster-mcchesney.php>, 2/2009)

"...it is time to begin to organize a revolt against the ruling class-imposed ceiling on civilian government spending and social welfare in U.S. society."

(Robert W. McChesney and John Bellamy Foster, "A New New Deal under Obama?," *Monthly Review*, <http://www.monthlyreview.org/090201foster-mcchesney.php>, 2/2009)

"Advertising is the voice of capital. We need to do whatever we can to limit capitalist propaganda, regulate it, minimize it, **and perhaps even eliminate it.** The fight against hyper-commercialism becomes especially pronounced in the era of digital communications."

(Robert McChesney, Interview, "Media Capitalism, the State and 21st Century Media Democracy Struggles," <http://www.socialistproject.ca/bullet/246.php>, 8/9/2009)

"Although *Monthly Review* has a current circulation of 8,500 -- and has never seen its circulation rise much above the 12,000 mark -- **it is one of the most important Marxist publications in the world, let alone the United States.**"

(Robert McChesney, "The *Monthly Review* Story: 1949-1984," <http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2007/mcchesney060507.html>, 6/5/2007)

Free Press on the United States' role in the World

Two weeks after 9/11 terrorist attacks: "The United States is, I think, by any honest account, the leading terrorist institution in the world today."

(Robert McChesney, "Nattering Networks: How Mass Media Fails Democracy," LiP Magazine, http://www.lipmagazine.org/articles/featclark_138.shtml, 9/24/2001)

Free Press on the American Political System and its Government

"In the United States, both the upper levels of the Republican and Democratic Parties are in the pay of the corporate media and communication giants."

(Robert McChesney and John Nichols, "Our Media, Not Theirs: The democratic struggle against corporate media," http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/McChesney/OurMedia_NotTheirs.html, 2002)

"In nearly every major war the United States has fought over the past century, the administration in power has lied through its teeth to generate public support, because it feared the people would not approve of war were they told the truth."

(Robert McChesney and John Nichols, "Our Media, Not Theirs: The democratic struggle against corporate media," http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/McChesney/OurMedia_NotTheirs.html, 2002)

Free Press on Hugo Chavez and Venezuela

"Venezuela is a constitutional republic. Chavez has won landslide victories that would be the envy of almost any elected leader in the world, in internationally monitored elections."

(Robert McChesney and Mark Weisbrot, "Venezuela and the Media: Fact and Fiction," <http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/06/01/1607>, 6/1/2007)

"Aggressive unqualified political dissent is alive and well in the Venezuelan mainstream media, in a manner few other democratic nations have ever known, including our own."

(Robert McChesney and Mark Weisbrot, "Venezuela and the Media: Fact and Fiction," <http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/06/01/1607>, 6/1/2007)

On Hugo Chavez shutting down television station RCTV, a Chavez critic: "If RCTV were broadcasting in the United States, its license would have been revoked years ago. **In fact its owners would likely have been tried for criminal offenses, including treason.**"

(Robert McChesney and Mark Weisbrot, "Venezuela and the Media: Fact and Fiction," <http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/06/01/1607>, 6/1/07)

Free Press on Media and Journalism

"Our job is to make media reform part of our broader struggle for democracy, social justice, and, **dare we say it, socialism.** It is impossible to conceive of a better world with a media system that remains under the thumb of Wall Street and Madison Avenue, under the thumb of the owning class."

(Robert W. McChesney, "Journalism, Democracy...and Class Struggle," *Monthly Review*, <http://www.monthlyreview.org/1100rwm.htm>, 11/2000)

"...any serious effort to reform the media system would have to necessarily be part of a revolutionary program to **overthrow the capitalist system itself.**"

(Robert McChesney, "The U.S. Media Reform Movement," *Monthly Review*, <http://www.monthlyreview.org/080915mcchesney.php>, 9/2008)

"All totaled, the suggestions we make here for subscription subsidies, postal reforms, youth media and investment in public broadcasting have a price tag in the range of \$60 billion over the next three years. This is a substantial amount of money. In normal times it might be too much to ask. But in a time of national crisis, when an informed and engaged citizenry is America's best hope, **\$20 billion a year is chicken feed...**"

(Robert McChesney, "The Death and Life of Great American Newspapers" *The Nation*, http://www.thenation.com/doc/20090406/nichols_mcchesney/4, 3/09)

"Barring the creation of a trust fund, Congress must find a significant steady revenue stream that is not subject to annual appropriations. **One such possibility is a tax of 0.5 percent of the purchase price for every home electronic device: multimedia player, cable and satellite set-top boxes, video game systems, televisions, etc.** ... And the fee would be paid by those consumers with the means to spend on new electronics."

("Changing Media, Public Interest Policies for the Digital Age" <http://freepress.net/files/changingmedia-chap10.pdf>)

"Only government can implement policies and subsidies to provide an institutional framework for quality journalism... The democratic state, the government, must create the conditions for sustaining the journalism that can provide the people with the information they need to be their own governors."

(Robert McChesney and John Nichols, "The Death and Life of Great American Newspapers," *The Nation*, http://www.thenation.com/doc/20090406/nichols_mcchesney/2, 3/18/2009)

"For the past decade, deregulatory policies have all but abandoned the government's longstanding role in supporting the production and distribution of information." That has failed. **And we must now build a new policy structure to achieve our goals.**"

("Changing Media: Public Interest Policies for the Digital Age" <http://www.freepress.net/node/61301>)

"The last thing we want to do, however, is rebuild the old media system. We are moving ahead toward a new kind of journalism... The result of such democratization will, in my view, be a **marked shift to the political Left.**"

(Robert McChesney, Interview, "Media Capitalism, the State and 21st Century Media Democracy Struggles," <http://www.socialistproject.ca/bullet/246.php>, 8/9/09)

"When you look at our founders, they did not only condone government subsidies of journalism, they demanded it."

(Robert McChesney, "Journalism should be subsidized by government, professor says," <http://www.dailyfreepress.com/journalism-should-be-subsidized-by-government-professor-says-1.2160014>, 2/2/10)

"It's gotten so bad that today, instead of nurturing and extending democracy and free speech, broadcasting threatens to warp it."

(Tim Karr, My DD Interview, <http://mydd.com/2007/1/15/meet-tim-karr-free-press>, 1/15/07)

Free Press on the Goal of Net Neutrality

"At the moment, the battle over network neutrality is not to completely eliminate the telephone and cable companies. We are not at that point yet. **But the ultimate goal is to get rid of the media capitalists in the phone and cable companies and to divest them from control.**"

(Robert McChesney, Interview, "Media Capitalism, the State and 21st Century Media Democracy Struggles," <http://www.socialistproject.ca/bullet/246.php>, 8/9/09)

Free Press on the Internet and the Free Market

“In reality, the Internet as we know it likely would not exist if it were not for regulation.”

(Derek Turner, “Free Press Summit: Changing Media,” <http://www.freepress.net/node/57152> , 5/14/09)

“The relationship between regulation and investment is not cause and effect. For me, net neutrality is the ultimate pro-competition policy. There is no reason to believe that this is going to send negative signals to Wall Street.”

(Ben Scott, C-SPAN: The Communicators, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8LrJL0Z3cg>, 9/25/09)

“Increasingly the Internet is no longer a commercial service, it’s an infrastructure...What we’re witnessing at the FCC now is the logical next step which is we are going to create a regulatory framework for the Internet which recognizes it is an infrastructure now and not a commercial service.”

(Ben Scott, C-SPAN: The Communicators, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8LrJL0Z3cg>, 9/25/09)

Free Press on US Communications Companies being morally equivalent to China

The longer the FCC waits, the more these companies will continue to invest in blocking technologies similar to those used in China to censor the Internet.”

(Ben Scott, “FCC investigates net neutrality violations,” Press Release, <http://www.freepress.net/release/326>, 1/14/08)

Free Press Observations about the iPhone

“The iPhone is simply the highest-profile example of a wireless internet market that is drifting further and further away from the free and open internet we've all come to expect. The only solution to this problem is a political one.”

(Ben Scott, “Comment is Free: Set the iPhone free!”, *The Guardian*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2007/jul/10/freetheiphone>, 7/10/07)

Free Press on Broadband and the Free Market

“The federal government is not a charity; it is an investor. What's more, it is a socially responsible investor. Taxpayers put money into broadband infrastructure only insofar as it serves the public interest. It's not a blank check.”

(Ben Scott, “Carriers: Keep broadband stimulus rules to minimum,” *PC World*, http://www.pcworld.com/businesscenter/article/161796/carriers_keep_broadband_stimulus_rules_to_minimum.html, 3/23/09)

Free Press flip-flop on Broadband Metering

In Favor in February:

From reply comments (WC 07-52, CS 97-80) filed by Free Press, Public Knowledge, Media Access Project, Consumer Federation of America, Consumers Union, New America Foundation, Participatory Culture Foundation: “Talking to the .01% highest-bandwidth users and offering them a premium connection sounds far more reasonable than targeting particular applications. Commenters have suggested creative methods of metering. Of course, metering could be used in ways to target competitors

or to raise prices for all consumers. **But metering can be a better method than blocking/degrading applications.**"

(http://www.freepress.net/files/freepress_comcast_petition_reply_comments.pdf, 2/28/08, p. 33)

Opposed in August:

"Consumers should not have to choose between secret arbitrary blocking and the very unreasonable practice of metering... These scare tactics shouldn't deter anyone from pursuing the policies we need to preserve a free and open Internet."

(Derek Turner, "Report: Metered Broadband Bad For Consumers, Businesses," Consumer Affairs, http://www.consumeraffairs.com/new04/2008/08/fp_metered_broadband.html, 8/08/2008)

Free Press on its Washington Influence

"But the core challenge is when policy is made behind closed doors, when we don't have the light of day on it. And that's what the telecoms are trying to do. They're trying to ... move behind the scenes. **Our great struggle is to push this into the open."**

(John Nichols, "The Death and Life of American Journalism: The Media Revolution that Will Begin the World Again," Democracy Now, http://www.democracynow.org/2010/2/4/robert_mcchesney_and_john_nichols_on, 2/4/10)

"Free Press is leading the fight. They're fighting at the FCC. They're fighting in the court system. They're basically fighting behind closed doors."

(Robert McChesney, "The Death and Life of American Journalism: The Media Revolution that Will Begin the World Again," Democracy Now, http://www.democracynow.org/2010/2/4/robert_mcchesney_and_john_nichols_on, 2/4/10)

Free Press & Civil Policy Discourse

Free Press Campaign Director Tim Karr on former Clinton Press Secretary Mike McCurry: "I wish people would stop being so mean to that dickhead Mike McCurry" (<http://twitter.com/TimKarr/status/7769223016> , 1/14/10)

Free Press Legal Advisor Marvin Ammori on Internet author Andrew Keen:

"You wonder why AT&T, Verizon, and others hire such vicious little lowlifes. Really, it's a mystery."

(http://www.huffingtonpost.com/marvin-ammori/verizon-and-atts-most-ann_b_435525.html, 1/25/10)

Free Press Campaign Director Tim Karr on telco analysts: "Scott (The telco troll who makes it his mission to secret away AT&T money as he slimes everyone who opposes his [correction: AT&T's] position on this issue) teams up with Richard (the high school debate team reject who concocts lies about people who don't follow his conspiratorial views about the Internet)."

(Tim Karr Blog Response, "Sock Puppet Redux," <http://mediacitizen.blogspot.com/2007/02/sock-puppet-redux.html> , 2/14/07)