



April 14, 2017

**For Immediate Release**

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**“Big Tent Radio Network”**

*Pacifica Foundation Director Comments on Berkeley Secession Effort*

**Houston** - Pacifica Foundation interim Executive Director Bill Crosier addressed members of the 5-station radio network after it became known that at least one of the KPFA Local Station Board members, with others, has secretly contacted celebrities and prominent supporters of progressive causes, falsely claiming that Pacifica is “collapsing”, and asking them to be on the board of a new nonprofit organization which would seek to acquire Pacifica's assets, or at least those of station KPFA.

The attachment to the email forwarded to Crosier follows his statement below.

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**Pacifica Foundation Interim Executive Director Bill Crosier's Statement**

As commercial media interests dominate our society and non-corporate journalism and culture struggle for survival, Pacifica, like most independent media networks, is facing financial, organizational, and technological challenges. But Pacifica's financial situation is beginning to turn around, with four of the stations doing very well in fund drives this year, and the fifth (KPFT) stepping up other fundraising. We had the most successful one-day fund drive ever, on March 2. In that drive, we got so many pledges for the new collection of historic audio recordings from Pacifica Radio Archives, that we had to order a second large batch of USB drives and just finished duplicating them and sending them out. We are working to improve Pacifica's finances, and we are making progress. Major donors are approaching us, asking how they can help. Pacifica also submitted a plan for financial stabilization and recovery to the Attorney General of California before the end of March, and this plan has received very positive reviews. Further, the majority of the Pacifica National Board (PNB) has a renewed commitment to financial stability so that the Pacifica mission can be preserved and so Pacifica can grow.

**It is certainly not correct to say that Pacifica is “collapsing”. In fact, *that is very misleading.* We are actually improving our financial stability.**

While I have had concerns about Pacifica's well-being in recent years, and feel very strongly about the importance of independent media, I am bothered that any local board member would falsely spread negative rumors about Pacifica. There is an ethical issue with passing along misleading information about Pacifica in order to line up oppositional support for another organization.

Is it not a conflict of interest, and a violation of fiduciary duty, for any board member to be secretly trying to line up well-known people to be on the board of a new organization, especially if that would discourage people from donating to Pacifica? It also seems strange that the recruitment involves telling prospective board members that no time or financial commitment is required, which makes us wonder what those board members are expected to do. What would help much more would be to ask those same people to help Pacifica directly - by recording announcements for our stations to encourage donations, for example, or helping to tell more people about the valuable and unique programming that we have. While I have nothing against contingency plans, it's wrong to falsely (and secretly) spread false rumors about Pacifica, in order to get support for this new clandestine organization.

Many of us on our national and local boards want to work together on a major Bylaws re-write this year, to improve our governance and support stronger fiscal stewardship. But we do not need a completely different organization in order to change our Bylaws or governance structure. We have reached a point where many people in Pacifica recognize that it is time for major changes to improve the way we function, and we expect to be able to do this in the coming months.

There is still much other work to do, including paying off debt that Pacifica has accumulated, getting caught up on audits, and dealing with a lawsuit by Empire State Building over unpaid antenna tower rent and related expenses for WBAI. We have a renewed commitment from the majority (but not all) of the Pacifica National Board to stop ignoring our financial problems and to get all of this under control. That's the main reason the PNB appointed me as interim Executive Director and re-hired Sam Agarwal as Chief Financial Officer. I've been one of the most vocal advocates for the PNB to develop a plan and to take immediate and responsible action to address our financial situation and insure recovery. Mr. Agarwal is also dedicated to repairing our finances. Although things were looking quite uncertain for the last few years, now we are working on it, and making good progress. Of course, it will take some time.

Many listeners and staff from the five main Pacifica stations and 220 affiliates within the Pacifica community are communicating and working together to build a network capable of addressing the political, environmental, social justice, economic and cultural needs of our time. **Setting up a secret organizations behind the backs of colleagues and fellow board members. and lobbying against those trying to save the network breeds confusion, distrust, and disunity when we most need to be supporting each other and this wonderful network of independent media.**

I ask those promoting this division to come and talk with us about your concerns, and work with us to meet our challenges together. I also encourage anyone approached by those promoting this new "Big Tent Radio Network" to instead join with us to protect and support Pacifica. We have been supporting free speech, uncensored news, independent music and public affairs, and peace for almost 70 years. We are not going away, we are improving, growing and adapting to change. Please help us to meet the amazing and daunting task before us. Pacifica is needed now, more than ever.

Bill Crosier, interim Executive Director, Pacifica Foundation

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(see attachment on next page)

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*Started in 1946 by conscientious objector Lew Hill, Pacifica's storied history includes impounded program tapes for a 1954 on-air discussion of marijuana, broadcasting the Seymour Hersh revelations of the My Lai massacre, bombings by the Ku Klux Klan, going to jail rather than turning over the Patty Hearst tapes to the FBI, and Supreme Court cases including the 1984 decision that noncommercial broadcasters have the constitutional right to editorialize, and the Seven Dirty Words ruling following George Carlin's incendiary performances on WBAI. Pacifica Foundation Radio operates noncommercial radio stations in New York, Washington, Houston, Los Angeles, and the San Francisco Bay Area, and syndicates content to over 220 affiliates. It invented listener-sponsored radio.*

## ***“Board Invitation Information Sheet” for the new secret organization “Big Tent Radio Network”***

Attention: This is a confidential communication. Work to establish our non-profit 501(c)3 is underway and being conducted under the radar. When we are a fait accompli, we will announce with a splash.

An Invitation to Save a Corporate Free National Radio Network with as much or as little time as YOU wish and NO MONEY from you

We invite and request you to join the Board of Big Tent Radio Network. We intend to make an offer to the collapsing Pacifica Foundation to receive its assets and liabilities. Our aim is to save/ grow listener sponsored radio to deliver news, information, ideas and music that contribute to a more just, peaceful, healthy, sustainable, culturally rich, beautiful world...while there is still time. We need you.

Pacifica is collapsing. With a diverse strong capable board, this project can move forward. At some point, the network will be rescued and revitalized...or...GONE.

What is The Pacifica Foundation? A non-profit FM radio network established 1947, the only totally listener sponsored radio network in the United States, has no corporate sponsors or links.

Powerful signals blanket 5 of our largest metropolitan areas:

- New York, our finance capital
- Los Angeles, our entertainment capital
- Washington, DC, our political capital
- San Francisco, our tech capital
- Houston, our oil capital
- + 220 independent affiliates across the nation and rapidly growing

Does Radio Matter? Terrestrial radio is the single most-used medium in the United States – in any given week, 91% of adults listen to it. It is one of the best mediums for reaching people outside the ideological bubbles created by social media--listeners discover new stations by spinning their dials, not clicking on links recommended by those who share their beliefs. Pacifica is a unique progressive media asset.

What We Are Doing?

- Establishing Big Tent Radio Network as a California non-profit and IRS 501(c)3
- Board recruiting: 13 dynamite progressive representative leaders, activists, specialists

What Can a Board Member Expect?

- Two teleconference Board meetings a year (active workgroups, for those interested in hands on)
- Powers to hire and fire the Executive Director and CFO (to assure adherence to mission)
- No time demands, but major involvement invited, no money demands

Why We Don't Need Your Money!

- Pacifica has a strong donor base. The SF Bay Area Fall Fund Drive alone raised \$780,000.
- Pacifica's biggest donors have said that they will give money when the network has an effective governance structure and professional management; we meet those conditions.
- Pacifica owns property in Berkeley that can be used to collateralize debt when the banks are assured of the new network's stability and professional management.