

----- Original Message -----

From: Margy Wilkinson

To: Andrew Phillips ; news@kpfa.org ; pnb@pacifica.org ; natfinancecom@yahoogroups.com ; pnb-frat@googlegroups.com ; KPFA LSB ; Arlene Engelhardt ; LaVarn Williams ; Berthold Reimers ; Carrie Core ; kpfa-staff list

Sent: Thursday, April 28, 2011 10:34 PM

Subject: Re: [KPFA-LSB 2011 Open] AN OPEN LETTER TO KPFA NEWS and Fwd: Report on claims of "corporate underwriting" from Merrill Lynch at WBAI

Open letter to Andrew Phillips re: Corporate Underwriting

Andrew:

We are concerned about your very public, negative response to a news broadcast with which you disagreed. As a manager it seems to us that any response should have been first directed privately to the KPFA news department. It is in our opinion that it is completely inappropriate for you to confuse your role as a boss with that of an interviewee on a news story.

First, as their employer, it is unwise and abusive to criticize employees publicly. As you have noted yourself, there are divisions at KPFA that impair the working environment, to have a manager publicly go on the attack against staff members can only make that situation worse. It makes no sense to us to accuse the news of behaving unfairly without sufficient investigation, when that is exactly what you have appeared to do. We are also disturbed at your attack on paid staff's union representative, CWA, as well as the website kpfaworker.org, which whatever you think of it, has the involvement of unpaid and paid workers at the station who have the right to organize as they see fit. The kinds of comments you made remind us of the worst of corporate America.

Secondly, as a news interviewee -- separate from your role as a supervisor -- you have a right to ask for a rebuttal, clarification or a retraction. However, we understand that both you and Arlene Engelhardt were each given extensive coverage on Monday and Tuesday on the KPFA news during which your views were aired unopposed. During the Sunday story, your views were also represented through your public report to the LSB after both you and Arlene were offered comment and did not respond. Your complaint that you were smeared seems odd when what you say in your email message and what all of us have heard you say publicly is that corporate funding must be "considered", "on the table", "in the mix", and "it's not good enough to say: no sponsorship." Your frequent repetition of this idea seems to us to be in fact "pushing" the idea of sponsorship.

We thank you for your decision not to go ahead with taking the 9:00 AM rebroadcast of Democracy Now! off the air. And we are pleased that you apparently realize that the tone of the first email you sent announcing the programming changes did not sound as if you were "exploring a number of options" but rather like the decision had been made, period. We too are interested in exploring options -- like the possibility of bringing back the Morning Show, moving programs around in the daily schedule and the possibility of new programs. However, we believe strongly that, as outlined in the Pacifica bylaws, these kinds of changes need to be done in a "...fair, collaborative and respectful manner to provide quality programming." That has not happened here.

In response to your original announcement we sent you an email in which we asked the following questions:

- 1) Did you look at KPFA's Arbitron numbers? If so, what did they show and how did they influence your decisions here?
- 2) Did you look at KPFA's online listening statistics? Again -- what did they show and how did they affect the process?
- 3) Did you consider pledging behavior during fund drives?
- 4) Did you consult KPFA's department heads about this proposal? If so, what was their response?
- 5) What attempts did you make to gather listener input?
- 6) Did you assess what programs on KQED and KALW we will be competing against in each time slot?
- 7) How did you assess how each program will support (or not) the program that follows it in the on-air line up?
- 8) Why isn't bringing back the Morning Show the answer?

How will the Talk Back show proposed for the 5-6 PM slot affect the audience for the News? Why would a "call-in" show be scheduled during the evening drive time when people who are driving are prohibited from using their phones? Does airing FSRN and Al Jazeera next to each other make sense? They're both international newscasts and it is likely that they will frequently duplicate each other's coverage.

We have had no response from you to these questions. It seems to us that a collaborative process begins with conversation. We are ready to do that.

Margy Wilkinson, Mal Burnstein, Pamela Drake, David Gans, Suzi Goldmacher, Conn Hallinan, Matthew Hallinan, Jack Kurzweil, Laura Prives, Tanya Russell, Dan Siegel, Rych Withers

[all signers are members of the KPFA Local Station Board]