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NEW SERIES CHALLENGES AMERICANS TO GET POLITICALLY INVOLVED

Bill Moyers, Eve Ensler and Tom Hayden Speak Out On *From the Left Coast*

**(San Francisco, July 7, 2003)** The Federal Communications Commission ruling on June 2<sup>nd</sup> brought unprecedented attention to the subject of media consolidation and its consequences for independent media—mobilizing groups as diverse as Moveon.org and the National Rifle Association to actively protest the proposed changes. Special interest groups were not the only ones vociferously protesting the changes; the FCC reportedly received a staggering 700,000 angry e-mails from private citizens. Judging from the huge public outcry, many in America believe that democracy is best served when the media provides diverse perspectives on the critical issues of the day.

As Robert Greenwald, Emmy Award-Winning Director and Executive Producer of an innovative new television series *From the Left Coast*, explains, “Television is an amazingly powerful medium because of its reach. Yet, alternative viewpoints on current events are rarely shown on television. We want to bring these issues into the mainstream by airing them to 20 million WorldLink households nationwide.”

That’s why Greenwald developed and produced *From the Left Coast*, an innovative new series of provocative four to forty-minute speeches delivered to local, grassroots organizations by some of the country’s most respected progressive leaders, among them Bill Moyers, Governor George Ryan, Tom Hayden and Eve Ensler. The series provides a wider audience and public forum for essential debates and ideas currently being discussed at the grassroots level. “After all,” continues Greenwald, “most of the major, democratic advancements in America have started at the grassroots level.”

*From the Left Coast*, designed to inspire active public debate and participation on important issues, will air on WorldLink TV beginning in July. Portions of *From the Left Coast* will also be made available for broadcast on KPFK Radio 90.7 FM (Los Angeles). A sampling of the *From the Left Coast* series shows a Bill Moyers acceptance speech for the Lifetime Leadership Award given at the June 4<sup>th</sup> Take Back America Conference in Washington, DC. Discussing the threats to American democracy and the history of the progressive media movement in America, Moyers goes on to speak of all the monumental human rights advances brought about by the progressive movement. “But,” exclaims Moyers, “democracy doesn’t work without citizens and activists. What’s right and good doesn’t come naturally—you have to fight for it. The flame of democracy will never go out as long as there’s one candle in your hand.”

*From the Left Coast* is committed to keeping that flame alive.

## **About Robert Greenwald:**

As an independent film producer and director, Robert Greenwald has built a career on making the personal political – and the political personal – for millions of TV viewers and moviegoers. His many socially conscious films have explored controversial topics from domestic abuse to toxic waste dumping, the juvenile justice system to nuclear war, and interracial relationships to international human rights abuse.

From the award-winning NBC TV movie "THE BURNING BED," (starring Farrah Fawcett in an Emmy-nominated performance) to the recent theatrical film, "STEAL THIS MOVIE" (starring Vincent D'Onofrio as 60's political activist Abbie Hoffman), Greenwald has consistently chosen to tackle complex issues and stories.

Since its inception in 1984, almost 50 television movies, miniseries and theatrical films have been produced under the "Robert Greenwald Productions" banner. As directed or produced by Greenwald, his films have earned 23 Emmy nominations, two Golden Globe nominations, eight Awards of Excellence from the Film Advisory Board, a Peabody Award, two NAACP awards, and a Best Director nomination from the Directors Guild of America, among many other accolades. In November 2002, Robert received the American Film Institute's coveted AFI Producer of the Year Award. In June 2003, the Los Angeles Chapter of the National Lawyer's Guild honored Robert with an award for advancing the cause of peace, justice, and freedom.

In 2002, Greenwald co-founded "Public Interest Pictures," a documentary division of RGP. Its first production was the award-winning documentary, "Unprecedented," about the stealing of the 2000 presidential election in Florida. In development now is a film about the state of American civil liberties.

In addition to his film work, Greenwald is a partner with Danny and Victor Goldberg in RDV Books, which last year published "It's A Free Country," a collection of essays on civil liberties in post-9/11 America. Currently in the works for RDV are a book by guerilla artist Robbie Conal ("Art Attack"); as well as a book by the founders of "September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows," a group of relatives of the victims of the 9/11 terrorist attacks who oppose vengeance in their names.

Greenwald is the co-founder, with Mike Farrell, of "Artists United," a group of actors and others who publicly opposed the rush to war in Iraq, and who are now working with social justice groups to continue bringing attention to important progressive causes.

A leader in the community as well as being an acclaimed producer and director, Greenwald is on the board of directors of "A Place Called Home," a gang prevention program in South Central Los Angeles, and of the Venice Community Housing Corporation. He also works with "Homies Unidos," a gang violence prevention and intervention program with projects in El Salvador and Los Angeles; as well as with "The Unusual Suspects," which brings theatre arts to at-risk teens.

## **About WorldLink TV:**

Founded in 1999, WorldLink TV is the first U.S. network offering a global perspective on news, current events and culture, presenting viewpoints seldom covered in the U.S.

media. In fact, 95% of the station's documentaries have never before been shown in the U.S.

WorldLink TV is seen nationwide via satellite on DIRECTV Channel 375 and on DISH Network channel 9410 and is accessible to more than 20 million households in the U.S. WorldLink TV's programming, combined with its innovative use of two-way digital link-ups and a participatory web site, deepens audience engagement and encourages active participation. WorldLink TV is a national non-commercial channel funded by viewer contributions and grants from major foundations. For complete program scheduling and Internet streaming, go to <http://www.worldlinktv.org/>.

To obtain copies of *From the Left Coast* speeches, please contact Jennifer Spoerri at [jspoerri@worldlinktv.org](mailto:jspoerri@worldlinktv.org) or 510-757-3321.