

Cutler Bay

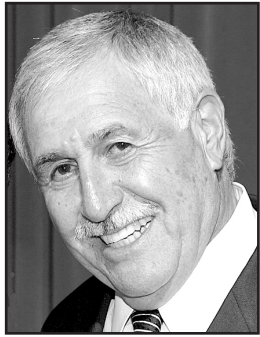
SERVING SOUTH DADE

JULY 13, 2010

There was a time when talk radio was fun, entertaining

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As many of you by now know, I once was a radio talk show host in South Florida. I was featured on

W I O D , WINZ, WSBH, WFTL and just about anyone who would have me back when local talk was the thing.

Now, of course, talk is dedicated to syndicated government bashing show hosts totally devoid of facts but with huge angry double ditto audiences.

In my day, radio was fun and entertaining. (At least I tried to be.) At the same time it was a great learning experience for me. On talk radio you get to do just that — talk — and talk I did, to literally thousands of people. You get to hear all kinds of views and learn a great deal about people in general, more than any other endeavor I have ever had, including politics.

I also learned just how gullible masses of people can be. They seem to begin worshiping talk show hosts and want to believe everything they say. I couldn't help myself by wanting to take advantage of this fact with my shows.

Examples:

On one occasion I had as a guest a fellow actor friend with a great Italian accent. We decided to do a skit whereby he was an Italian spaghetti grower from the Calabria region of Italy. He was to be introducing a new

brand of spaghetti grown in the beautiful warm sun of his hometown and cut from the spaghetti trees at the exact moment of ripeness.

This was the time for the Spaghetti Festivallo where there was dancing in the streets as the spaghetti was being harvested. He proposed to sell this product in the U.S. at \$350 per pound. Yes, there were many calls wanting to know where and when it could be purchased. I only wish I had some to sell; I would have made a killing.

Another time, I had an alleged author, Doctor Aultcaulker (get it?) who wrote a 3,500-page book, called *Too Old, Too Slow*, published by Sodom and Gomorrah Publishing in Sodom, TX.

The book purported to blame all our nation's troubles on old people. It included statistics such as 10,000 Achilles tendon injuries every year caused by little old ladies pushing their shopping carts into the backs of people's legs. The banking crisis was caused by the same old ladies taking up the teller's time by showing pictures of their grandchildren thereby using up valuable bank resources.

Some people wanted to order the book, which was being sold for \$350. Others screamed at me for allowing Dr. Aultcaulker to espouse his views over the radio. Several wrote and swore they would never listen to my station again. One of the secrets in talk radio is that we know that once someone says that, they are listeners for life.

You can get into trouble on occasion. Rather than just hang up on people who disagreed with me

(something I cannot do as a politician), I used to flush them down a toilet with one of my sound effect tapes. I also was earning my real living as a salesman at the time and on one sales call at Jefferson's Department Store the buyer told me I had just flushed his favorite uncle down the drain. I got no orders that day.

Sometimes I would create an issue out of nothing, like some politicians and others occasionally do. I built up the suspense for about 20 minutes regarding a serious problem facing virtually everyone. When I finally sprung it, it was: "What happens to those socks that disappear from your washer or dryer?" I was on the air for five straight hours that day and the phone lines were lit up every minute that I was on the air.

My producer reminded me that I had forgotten to give out the station's phone numbers, usually a must in radio, but it made no difference. People were determined to get through and help solve the problem. One caller, claiming to be the CEO of Atlantic Knitting Mills, advised me that as a result of listening to my show he was planning to introduce a new product to the market called Ménage-a-Sock.

You can see why that was so much more fun than being a politician, plus I got lots of free food from sponsors and even had a pizza named after me at Brick Oven Pizzeria in Hollywood. How many politicians can say that? It was pretty good pizza, too!

Other articles of national importance can be viewed at Ernie's website at <www.sochin.com>.