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NEW ANTI-TELEMARKETER LAW IN NEW YORK STATE

New York State governor George Pataki recently signed into law a bill which will permit consumers to be taken off telemarketers' target lists. The law goes into effect on 1 April 2001 and makes it illegal for a telemarketer to keep a name and phone number on their list. They are given 30 days from the date of registration to remove the names. The following site permits pre-registration with the idea that a registered consumer may have his/her name removed from these lists effective 1 April 2001:

<https://www.consumer.state.ny.us/prereg.htm> .

I preregistered some days ago. I got tired of having my phone ring just as I'm sitting down to eat. It remains to be seen on 1 April if this is gonna work or not.

I know - it almost sounds too good to be true. It seems too easy. But, the URLs and the CSB Home Page seem authentic enough. We'll see...

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EDITORIAL: WHY DO SOME HAMS DISLIKE THE ARRL?

You hear it all the time on the air, at ham gatherings, in polite conversation. There are many amateur radio operators who simply do not like the American Radio Relay League (ARRL or, The League).

There are approximately 712,000 hams in the United States (210,000 Techs, 121,000 Tech Plusses, 60,000 Novices, 134,000 Generals, 93,000 Advanced, and 94,000 Extras). Somewhat less than a third of U.S. amateurs belong to the ARRL. One major reason for this is the relatively high cost of membership, currently at \$34 per year, soon to be at \$39 per year. Not everyone, myself included, can afford membership in an association for hobbyists. For comparison, membership in my Professional association, The Wildlife Society costs \$60 per year, not including its Journal (another \$90); I can't afford that either. However, I scrape up enough money every September to pay my dues to The League for two reasons: (1) to obtain QST magazine, a publication of the highest standards, and (2) to support the League's political positions and lobbying efforts, particularly with regard to its relationship with the U.S. Federal Government and, to a very slightly lesser degree, due to its influence with the international amateur community and their governments.

There are a lot of people out there who simply do not like amateur radio operators or, possibly more specifically, do not like the diversity and flexibility of bandwidth and operating privileges. We have more available bands, bandwidth, and modes of communication and fewer restrictions than virtually any other licensed or unlicensed service in the world, including the military (except in time of war). Cell phone operators, wireless digital information (Internet) services, the commercial radio and TV broadcast industry, paging companies, and other wireless communication organizations covet our bands and frequencies. (I won't mention the little old ladies who blame ham operators for interference on "As The World Turns" - it's easier to blame us than poorly filtered and over-amplified (illegal) CB and/or public service radios nor will I mention those persons who feel the airwaves should be "free for all" to use as they see fit; these persons are ignorant, misinformed, and are happier remaining that way). Clearly, if these major opponents to amateur radio had their way, we would lose much or even all of our operating bandwidth.

It is my observation and viewpoint that the ONLY entity standing between the Federal Government (read: Congress and the FCC) and those factions who would remove, restrict, replace, or otherwise dissipate our amateur privileges, be they bandwidth, equipment, assigned frequencies, modes, licenses, or whatever, is the American Radio Relay League. If we did not have The League, we would not have the magnitude and diversity of privileges that we have now, if we had any at all. I challenge anyone out there to tell me who else in this country represents and defends amateur radio operators to our government? I would really like to know!

I will certainly agree with some League critics that it sometimes appears to be a slow bureaucracy with policy changes progressing at a glacial pace or in the wrong direction, if at all. For some examples, DXCC, WAS, and other ARRL DX Awards still refuse to accept electronically-transmitted QSL reports ("e-QSLs"). And, there are a LOT of hams who disagree with the League's position on Morse Code requirements, or lack thereof, for higher licenses. Further, there may be some who laugh at the League's attempts to have PRB-1 retroactively applicable to subdivisions and other residential properties which have CCRs (Conditions, Covenants, and Restrictions) against amateur radio towers. [Note: PRB-1 is the FCC regulation restricting communities from regulating amateur radio towers].

These above examples are certainly petty and shallow reasons for dismissing the ARRL as an entire organization. I do not believe that we need to agree with every single policy, guideline, and philosophy that The League promulgates to be able to support it any more than I believe that two people have to agree on everything to remain friends.

Whether the ARRL's disclaimers want to admit it or not, The League does, in fact, represent us, the amateur radio operators of the United States. It remains the ONLY organization or entity which does this. If we fail to support it or, worse, attempt to undermine its activities, the only losers will be us, the amateur radio operators of the United States.

Again, I challenge anyone to demonstrate how the League does NOT represent nor support the rights of the amateur radio community. Corollary to this challenge, I would like to hear just why some hams simply do not like the ARRL. I will be more than happy to print a rebuttal to this editorial and/or comments on the theme of this editorial.

-K2FRD

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As always, if you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, feel free to let me know via email: thefred@ascent.net

