

Nicholas Von Hoffman

Music and the first amendment

"nerves, stress, headache pain. When you feel one of those headaches building, Anacin has what it takes . . . Vanquish. It's got everything going for it . . . once in a while wouldn't you like to take a vacation from tension without leaving town? You can with quiet world, the modern, non-habit-forming calmativ tablet for simple nervous tension . . . that little, gentle, blue pill, Compoz . . . Nytol has the good housekeeping seal . . . It helps you get to sleep fast. You wake up feeling good . . . when the name of the pain is nervous tension headache, the name of the remedy is Cope."

—Excerpts from broadcast drug commercials.

WASHINGTON—Not too long ago the Federal Communications Commission put out a notice threatening radio and TV station owners with license renewal troubles if they played songs with lyrics "tending to promote or glorify" drugs. They didn't mean any of the stuff mentioned below. What they are after is marijuana, acid, meth, etc.

Their action is so mischievously unenforceable, that the commission must have had other motives for jumping on the first amendment rights of everybody in the

music industry. You can only suppose their target was sex, hair and peace politics, and that these tight-jawed geezers thought their rule would be a good roundabout way of frightening the station owners into banishing the sentiments of the young and the deprived from the air.

So who knows

Aside from being out and out censorship, the rule's vagueness puts every broadcaster in jeopardy. The commission can get any license holder any time it wants because the poor guy has no way of knowing when he has broadcast objectionable lyrics.

Variety magazine puts the case well: "Music biz execs are amused that the question of drug propaganda in pop music should be raised now when that kick is finished. A couple of years ago, some of the hit songs, such as 'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds' . . . and 'White Rabbit' could be interpreted as paeans to drugs. But then as now, the specialized jargon used by drug glorifiers make it difficult for the average station programmer to know if drugs are really the subject of the song. Who knew until a few months later that

"Mr. Tambourine Man" was really about a drug pusher, or was he?"

To make it more confusing, some songs that originally were dope ditties no longer are. But if the commission has its way, we'll have to rush into the nursery and smash every copy of that kindergarten favorite, "Puff the Magic Dragon."

By promulgating this rule, the commission can take any song from "Angels We Have Heard on High" to "Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder," and use the playing of it as an excuse to take away a man's broadcasting license. What a great gimmick for persecuting stations broadcasting news and political opinion that the wise and reverend commissioners disapprove of. And if you think they're above persecution, look at how they've hounded the leftist Pacifica Foundation stations in New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Many people would agree that the use of the federally licensed airways to cultivate people's taste for massive overdosing of themselves with drugs is a serious problem. The question is who is pushing the most of what drugs, and what's the best way to get at the problem.

The best way isn't censorship, not even in Vivarin. The best way is use of the equal-time doctrine to permit people who think this stuff is harmful to expound their views. A case could be made for censorship if most people were as meagerly endowed in the head as the Federal Communications Commissioners, but they're not. If they're permitted all the information, people will decide wisely.

The bitterest irony of this act is that it allows the worst drug pushers of all to go on as before. The beer and wine people are left untouched. So alcohol, the most dangerous, the most destructive, the most murderously abused of all drugs will continue to be sold through commercials and glorified in song. Stations can continue to broadcast songs like "This Night" without fear and with impunity. Dig these lyrics:

Lady, I'm Looking for a jukebox
A bar stool that fits my bottom side . . .
This midnight rider lost his saddle
And I'm in no mood for thinking
I need some liquid consolation
This night ain't fit for nothing but drinking.
Los Angeles Times-Washington Post News Service

On the right . . . William F. Buckley, Jr.

The unmaking of Ramsey Clark

During this period, presidential hopefuls are bringing out books; either that, or else authors are writing books about them. In the case of Ramsey Clark, it is not fair to suppose that someone else wrote his book, the widely heralded *Crime in America*. It is a true expression of this amiable, well-meaning man who, in the world of thought, cannot even ride a bicycle.

Every now and again, the American critical mechanism really goes to work on somebody like Ramsey Clark: and this has now happened.

In the current *Commentary*, Professor James Q. Wilson of Harvard goes through the book and concludes, pained, that "As a statement of personal moral and political conviction, it conveys a message that will reassure those who wish to avoid coming to grips with the crime problem and will disappoint those who wish to think seriously about it." As analysis, he finds that the "book contains individual sentences supportive of a wide range of mutually inconsistent positions." And consider:

"Even the question of whether street or violent crime is important enough to worry about is left unclear. On page 49 we are told that since only one person in 400 was the victim of a crime of violence in 1967, the average individual's chance of being a victim was 'once in 400 years.' If one assumes that only half of all violent crimes are reported, then the individual's chances are 'once in 200 years.' The implication is clear: what are we so excited about?"

"One thing we should be excited about," says Professor Wilson, "is the misrepresentation embodied in these figures. If the average person has each year a one in 200 chance of being a victim then his lifetime chances of being a victim are the sum of these annual probabilities over his life expectancy. If the average man lives seventy years, then his chances of being a victim of a violent crime at some time are seven in 20, or about one in three, not one in 200."

Professor Sidney Hook, writing in *Fortune*, is equally mystified. "Clark's failure to face up to the necessity for hard choices in the prevention and control of crime results in a shocking absence of common sense. There is no conflict between liberty and safety," he declares. "We will have both, or neither." That is sheer Oregon Daily Emerald

balderdash. In many situations, liberty and safety are inversely related . . . The safety of a traffic system depends upon restriction of motorists' freedom to drive in any lane or at any speed they please."

It is left for Professor van den Haag, in *National Review*, to inter this pathetic book, around which the left-liberals are forming. I give you an example of what happens when you analyze Ramsey Clark:

"Clark," (says van den Haag), "has mastered misleading comparisons. He indignantly denounces 'Spiro Agnew who supported the shooting of looters,' since 'fewer than 250 died in riots' while 25,000 are killed by drunken drivers. Whereupon he asks sarcastically, 'why not shoot drunken drivers?' . . . Why call 'for shooting looters when no one is heard to

suggest the same treatment for the deadlier crime?"

"Now, proportionately, I think, drunken driving leads to injury less often than rioting—as Clark should have known. He also knows that this is the only relevant comparison, since elsewhere he (rightly) attacks as misleading, statistics which state crime frequencies rather than crime rates (proportions). However, both drunken driving and looting are certainly dangerous criminal acts. Policemen should arrest the offenders and, if they resist, or try to escape, use whatever force is needed to control them. Nobody advocated shooting looters after arrest. The Vice President (unlike Clark, Lindsay et al.) urged that the necessary force be used to make arrests and to prevent con-

tinuation of the criminal action. I am sure Mr. Agnew advocates no less for any escaping or resisting offender, driving or walking, drunk or sober. So do I. It is the former Attorney General who advocates an exemption for looters—not, as he disingenuously suggests, the Vice President for drunken drivers."

Letter

Emerald Falls

Trying to correct inaccuracies and misleading information published by the Emerald is somewhat like trying to catch Niagara Falls in a bucket. Nevertheless, I shall attempt to do this for the article on Dr. Edward Teller's recent appearance here, which I attended.

First, many of the protestors were under the impression that the bomb dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki was a fusion bomb (H-bomb). This is incorrect. The bombs used against these cities were fission bombs (A-bombs). Dr. Teller helped to develop the H-bomb, first tested more than six years after the end of World War II. Although he explained this, your reporter evidently wasn't listening.

Second, Teller was not "pressured" by critical students into saying that the A-bombing of Japanese cities without warning was a mistake. He has said that publicly several times before.

Third, Dr. Teller's lecture, though open to the public, was not advertised as an open discussion on politics and morality. It was advertised as an astrophysics lecture on the subject of supernovae. The behavior of the protestors during Teller's talk violated not only his right of free speech, but the rights of those who had come to hear him talk on the announced subject. This is a fact of extreme importance which was ignored by your reporter.

My intent in this letter is not to defend Teller's views, many of which I oppose as heartily as any of the protestors, but to say please, Emerald editor and reporters, just publish the facts and leave the interpreting up to the reader. Intelligent college students don't want to be spoon-fed your personal biases in every news article.

Raymond C. Kelly
Graduate student, Chemistry



"Kick 'em off the skids! . . . We're saving American lives!"