"We're Not Gonna Take It": An Examination of Congress and Controversial Music

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"WE'RE NOT GONNA TAKE IT": AN EXAMINATION OF CONGRESS AND CONTROVERSIAL MUSIC

By

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The purpose of this thesis is to examine the role that the United States Congress has played in the last half century in monitoring controversial music. There has always been a strong relationship between music and politics. The music of the Civil Rights Movement and the protest songs of the Vietnam War are prime examples. A brief summary provides a backdrop to the central focus of the thesis: congressional actions and hearings about music that took place in the 1980s. A number of the questions that will be addressed include the following: What was the context in which these events took place? What prompted the actions taken by Congress? What were the political and social/cultural contexts of the time? Which artists and what genres of music were being criticized? What was the outcome of the hearings in terms of public policy? What was the response of the music industry and of individual artists?
Introduction

Music has a beautiful way of bringing people together. It can transcend race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, language, and more. It also has a way of bringing societal and political issues into the forefronts of the public mind, and beginning of a dialogue about them. The connection between music and politics cannot be denied; it spans genres and generations. Billie Holiday’s “Strange Fruit”, first recorded and published in 1937, protests the lynching of African Americans in the South, as well as racism on the broader American stage. The anti-war anthems of the Vietnam War era have a clear connection to politics, with songs like “Fortunate Son” by Credence Clear Water Revival criticizing those political leaders who support the war without having to pay the cost themselves. The relationship between music and politics is clear. Music often criticizes political issues and figures freely, as freedom of expression is one of our many rights as citizens. What happens, however, when political figures strike back at music?

Music of the Past

While it is not unheard of for music to carry a deeper message or meaning within its lyrics, protest songs are a different beast all together. Instead of lyrics that deal with more superficial topics, protest songs address societal, political, and cultural issues in an often more approachable manner. Some of the earliest examples of protest songs in the Untied States date back to the nineteenth century, and address topics such as war, the abolitionist movement, and the women’s
suffrage movement. Songs such as “When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again”, which was written and published in 1863, were used during the American Civil War to express the longing that friends and relatives had to see their loved ones return from the battle lines. The song was used by both the Union and the Confederacy during the Civil War. “Song of the Abolitionist” (1843), of course, had to do with the abolition of slavery in the United States. Prominent abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison originally wrote the lyrics of the song. The message behind the lyrics is meant to encourage those who support ending slavery to stand tall in the face of adversity and resist those who still believe slavery had a place in the world. The lyrics outline the battle for liberty and freedom in the United States with prominent military imagery, as seen in the example below:

I am an Abolitionist! Then urge me not to pause,
For joyfully do I enlist In Freedom's sacred cause;
A nobler strife the world ne'er saw, Th'enslaved to disenthral;
I am a soldier for the war, Whatever may befall.

Another abolitionist song is “Sometimes I feel like a Motherless Child” (1899). This is a Negro spiritual, or Christian song, created by African-Americans, which conveys the grief that a child feels when being torn away from his or her family and sold to another slave owner. While the meaning can be very literal, it can also be argued that the message refers to the feeling African-American slaves have of being torn away from their homeland. On the women’s suffrage front, songs such as “Daughters
of Freedom (The Ballot Be Yours)” (1871) and “Shall Women Vote?” (1881), referenced the movement and its issues. Lyrics like “March on to watchwords Justice and Right!” and “Daughter of freedom, the truth marches on, / Yield not the battle till ye have won!” from the former song illuminate the idea of the suffrage movement being a battle for women, encouraging them to never give up until they win the fight for women’s votes. In “Shall Women Vote?” the lyrics ask how anyone could ever answer no while claiming to believe in freedom and liberty. The lyrics go on to point out more hypocrisy of those against the movement in the second to last stanza:

Talk not of freedom, equal rights,
Cold hearted, selfish knaves,
While in our land, around our hearths,
Dwell twenty million slaves.
Love, justice, liberty, demands,
That they should be set free,
Can you such pow'rs as these withstand,
And claim consistency?

While these are just a few examples of protest song of the nineteenth century, they each outline one of the three major issues of the time: the abolitionist movement, the women’s suffrage movement, and the Civil War.
In the twentieth century, more politically charged songs emerged, either because they were better documented and preserved or because music was finally making it onto the airwaves with the invention of the radio just five years before the beginning of the new century. In the early decades of the twentieth century, the hot topics of the day were the Great War, class struggle, the Great Depression, racial discrimination, and the labor movement. Many of the protest songs from the very early portion of the 1900s to 1930 dealt with the struggle of the working class and the attempt to unionize. Joe Hill, the most famous protest songwriter of this time, wrote songs such as “The Preacher and the Slave” (1911), which called for workers to unite and fight for freedom. He also takes a stab at religious figures, whom he refers to as ‘Holy Rollers’, by saying that they want to take the working man’s money for the church, but if the working man keeps his money to try and make a better life for his family, then he is being selfish and will go to Hell. With war on the horizon in 1914, it was not unusual to hear that it was unpopular in some circles. “I Didn’t Raise My Boy To Be A Soldier” (1915) echoed the unfavorable opinion that many American pacifists had over getting involved in the Great War. The song’s theme is that of a mother mourning the loss of her son, wondering “who dares to place a musket on his shoulder, / to shoot some other mother’s darling boy?” The mother in the song goes on to sing that it is the nation’s governments that should be figuring out the issues, instead of stooping to violence and sending soldiers off to deal with their mess.

In the 1930s, most protest songs revolved around the Great Depression and racial discrimination. Widespread poverty due to the Depression and the Dust Bowl
inspired music to become more serious in nature. Songs such as “Detroit Moan”, “Brother Can You Spare A Dime?”, and “Gloomy Sunday” captured the tone of the era. “Gloomy Sunday”, performed by Billie Holiday, was originally written about the conditions in Hungary during the Great Depression, but the loss of life and hope echoed on the American stage as well. The song has not only become a part of the sadness of the social climate of the time, but part of a sad urban legend. Throughout the 1930s, the song was found playing at the scene of various suicides in Hungary and the United States. Years later, the composer committed suicide as well. “Gloomy Sunday” was banned in 1941 and was not taken off the BBC's banned list until 2002. In Bing Crosby's “Brother Can You Spare A Dime?”, the lyrics start off by referring to the “American Dream” that citizens are inspired to work towards. Each stanza discusses a new situation that the singer finds himself in during the Great Depression, and echoes the same phrase. An excerpt of this is below:

They used to tell me I was building a dream
With peace and glory ahead
Why should I be standing in line?
Just waiting for bread?

Once I built a railroad, I made it run
Made it race against time
Once I built a railroad, now it’s done
Brother, can you spare a dime?
Once I built a tower up to the sun
Brick and rivet and lime
Once I built a tower, now it's done
Brother, can you spare a dime?

Other songs, such as "Strange Fruit", again performed by Billie Holiday, and "The Bourgeois Blues" dealt with racial discrimination in the United States. "The Bourgeois Blues" describes a man and his wife being called "niggers" by a white man in their hometown of Washington D.C.; He calls it a "bourgeois" town and advises other African Americans not to settle down there. Billie Holiday’s "Strange Fruit" describes a scene that was all too common in the South: a lynching. She likens the body hanging in the tree, swaying in the wind, to a 'strange fruit'. The lyrics are very powerful, and the full song has been included in Appendix A.

The 1960s brought about some of the most well-known and recognized protest songs. This decade was one of immense cultural change, with the Civil Rights Movement, the Vietnam War, and ideals of peace (and sometimes of revolution) all taking center stage. During the March on Washington in 1963, artist Joan Baez sang, "Oh, Freedom" and "We Shall Overcome"; both songs became anthems of the movement. One of the key figures of protest songs in the sixties was Bob Dylan. Dylan wrote songs such as "Blowin In the Wind" (1962) and "These Times They Are A-Changin" (1964), both dealing with racism and actions taken by key political figures in the South. Some of his other songs, most notably "Talkin' World War III
Blues” and “Masters of War”, comment on the United States’ involvement in war.

“Masters of War” can be largely applied to the Vietnam War and United States’ involvement in it, even though it was written before the Vietnam War really erupted; the song is largely about the war policies of the United States as a whole. In “Masters of War”, Dylan sings about those who decide to make war—the congressmen and the military leaders. He sings about how they are ready to pull back the trigger of a gun, but leave another to fire. They step back and watch as other men and boys fight the fight that they created. “Fortunate Son” (1969) by Credence Clear Water Revival, echoes Dylan’s sentiments. In a Red Pepper article written about *The Politics of Bob Dylan*, Mike Marqusee says of Dylan’s early musical career:

> The protest songs that made Dylan famous and with which he continues to be associated were written in a brief period of some 20 months – from January 1962 to November 1963. Influenced by American radical traditions (the Wobblies, the Popular Front of the thirties and forties, the Beat anarchists of the fifties) and above all by the political ferment touched off among young people by the civil rights and ban the bomb movements, he engaged in his songs with the terror of the nuclear arms race, with poverty, racism and prison, jingoism and war (p. 1).

> The 1980s brought about anti-Reagan protest songs, and the birth of rap music. Bruce Springsteen’s “Born in the U.S.A.” (1984) is one such song, although it is often misconstrued as being largely pro-American. The Reagan Administration came under fire for selling arms to the radical Islamic regime of Iran in what became known as the Iran-Contra Affair. Because of this, a number of protest songs were born. “All She Wants to Do Is Dance” (1984) by Don Henley was one such song, protesting how Americans were only concerned with dancing while Molotov
cocktails and gun sales were happening across the world. The rise of rap and hip-hop also gave birth to politically charged songs, with Reagan's administration itself being credited for the inadvertent creation of the genre. N.W.A. came out with the song “Fuck Tha Police” (1988) and Public Enemy came out with “Fight the Power” (1989). Both comment on fighting “The Man” and the negative treatment of African Americans by the police. It just so happens that this is also the decade in which our story takes place. It was a decade that reflected major shifts from the politics and culture of the ones that had preceded it.

The Social and Cultural Contexts of the 1980s

The 1980s were a time of major conservatism in the United States. After the counter-culture movements of the 1960s and early 1970s—the Civil Rights Movement, protests over the Vietnam War, the Watergate scandal, trouble in the Middle East, and an economic crisis - American citizens had lost faith in their government and its figures. As idealism met the realities of rising crime rates, inflation, and foreign policy disasters, the “Decade of Decadence” took a turn towards conservative policies and government. New concerns and controversies shaped the 1980s, a decade marked as well as the presidency of Ronald Reagan.

One of the many social contexts that shaped the “Decade of Decadence” was the emergence of AIDS on the world’s stage. According to Mayo Clinic, AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) is a chronic, potentially life-threatening condition caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). It is a sexually transmitted infection, but it can also be spread different ways: contact with infected
blood, and also during pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding. The first cases in the United States began in the early 1980s among homosexual men. As the years passed, it was found in heterosexual women/men, children, and drug users. Alarmed by the effects of the disease, blood banks began testing donated blood, and people started disinfecting their needles (AVERT). But only so much could be done to prevent alienation and fear of individuals that contracted either AIDS or HIV.

On 28 January 1986, NASA's space shuttle, the Challenger, was in the process of being launched into space when it exploded on live national television. The Challenger was a space shuttle that was widely praised for going on multiple excursions throughout space. Prior to the explosion, the Challenger had successfully completed 9 different voyages (History). However, on this day, the weather was extremely bad, and low temperatures caused two rubber O-rings to fail, resulting in the explosion of the entire ship. As family members watched at the base of the lift, and millions watched on live television, the Challenger exploded 73 seconds after liftoff, immediately killing the seven-passenger crew on it. One of the members on the ship was a civilian teacher, hoping to teach students around the country from outer space. This was the first major space shuttle disaster to occur in the United States' NASA space program.

On 19 October 1987, the world's largest stock market crash occurred. Now known as "Black Monday", the Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA) fell almost 22% (Investopedia). It was one of the most significant events in financial history because it started a major decline in the global stock market. Although many economists have tried to explain why this major decline occurred, most experts agree that there
is not one good reason. Like any economy, it is natural to have inclines and declines. The two years prior to Black Monday, the economy was going through what is called a Bull Market, which is an upward trend of market activities (NASDAQ). Appropriately, following this trend, there was a decline in the market. Through an interesting psychological break, many investors panicked and began to abruptly sell their stocks. As more and more investors sold their stocks (due to witnessing other investors selling their stocks) the prices of the stocks began to decline at a rapid rate. Ironically, this price drop made even more investors sell their stocks. Panic broke out and the stock market dropped globally.

On 24 March 1989, an oil tanker, Exxon Valdez, hit a reef in Alaska’s Prince William Sound and spilled over 10 million gallons of crude oil into the ocean (Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History). Millions of gallons of oil entered the ocean and spread to wildlife. Due to poor timing, the clean up process was incredibly hard, as a storm blew through the ocean the following day. To make matters worse, the Alaska Prince William Sound was not easily accessible. The only way to access the area was through boat and air, causing the cleanup process to be nearly impossible. An already upsetting incident became even worse when the public discovered that the captain of the ship was intoxicated during the crash. He was criminally charged and was served a $50,000 fine as well as 1,000 hours of community service (The Atlantic).

Cultural changes could also be seen in the emergence of the “Yuppie” Generation. This generation, which is identified as being part of Generation Y, includes those born between the late 1970s and early 1990s. Family sitcoms were
also on the rise in the 1980s, with shows such as "The Cosby Show" and "All in the Family" exploring social issues in a generally light-hearted and comedic way. "All in the Family" addressed, for example, racism, homosexuality, rape, religion, abortion, the Vietnam War, and women's liberation. "The Cosby Show" was revolutionary in its own right because it had a storyline that revolved around an upper-middle class African American family.

The Political Context of the 1980s

After the Watergate scandal of the Nixon administration and the one term presidency of Jimmy Carter, trust in the government was weak. Though the Reagan administration boosted faith in the government to a certain extent, distrust in the political system heightened after the Iran-Contra Affair.

In 1985, the Iran-Contra Affair marred the Reagan presidency. The affair was prompted by a disagreement between Iran and Iraq, nations that were causing trouble in the Middle East. Iranian terrorists kidnapped and took seven American civilians hostage. Iran secretly approached the United States for a military weapons trade deal. Reagan saw this as an opportunity to ease tension and create a better relationship with Iran, as well as have a greater say in the troubled Middle East.

Even though the trade would break embargo rules, the United States went ahead and made the deal with Reagan's approval. Scandal arose when the Iranian terrorists let only three of the hostages go, and took another three hostage. The public found out about the trade and immediately criticized him for negotiating with terrorists. He denied the trade at first, and then later admitted it when the public
accused him of being dishonest. To make things worse, $18 million of that trade deal went missing in government files. It was later discovered that Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North of the National Security Council was funding the missing money to the Contras (rebel groups) in Nicaragua. A change in the world order, however, was about to occur.

The Cold War had begun in 1949 when old allies, the United States and the Soviet Union, began clashing with their different views. The United States was weary of the Soviet Union's communist views, as well as their frantic and aggressive leader at the time, Joseph Stalin. Tensions grew high when both superpowers introduced nuclear weapons, and even higher when space discovery became a factor. In the late 1980s, democratizing efforts by new leaders in the Soviet Union brought about change. In 1989, the Berlin Wall, a physical barrier between Soviet-dominated East Germany and West Germany, was torn down. German unification and the collapse of the Soviet Union soon followed, ushering in a new era of global politics.

**Context of the Hearings on Music**

The road to the hearings on Capitol Hill began with a record in a family room. It was December of 1984, and Tipper Gore had just gotten back from buying a new album with her eleven-year-old daughter. The album in question was Prince's *Purple Rain*, one of the most popular albums of the decade. Mrs. Gore and her daughter put the record on and listened to it together. It was after four tracks that the song "Darling Nikki" came on. By the title name, it would appear harmless, but Mrs. Gore and her daughter were shocked by the words that they heard coming

“I knew a girl named Nikki
Guess (you) could say she was a sex fiend
I met her in a hotel lobby
Masturbating with a magazine”

After this incident, Mrs. Gore became more observant with respect to the nature of television and popular music of the time. On the up and coming MTV, she watched Mötley Crüe’s “Looks That Kill” music video, which has scantily clad women featured in it, and Van Halen’s “Hot For Teacher”, which features a teacher doing a strip tease for her male students. With her kids, and many more, watching and listening to this type of material, she began to worry. Her worry was shared by other mothers, one of them being Susan Baker. In early 1985, Susan Baker, wife of U.S. Treasury Secretary James Baker, visited Mrs. Gore, and the two talked about the content of popular music and television. Both had become aware of the alarming content that was on display for their children, and along with two other women they decided to establish a nonprofit.

In May 1985, the women set out to alert the community about the content of popular media as the Parents Music Resource Center, or PMRC. They invited various community leaders, friends, political representatives, and music industry representatives to learn about this new threat to American children and teenagers.
Only one music industry representative was scheduled to show up for this meeting: Eddie Fritts, the president of the National Association of Broadcasters, or NAB.

Although Mr. Fritts was not physically there, his wife was, with a couple of NAB staff members. With them was a letter from Mr. Fritts (Appendix B) that was sent to over eight hundred group station owners, alerting them of the emerging genre of "porn rock". Only a couple of weeks later, Mr. Fritts also wrote to major record label companies in support of the PMRC, asking that all records sent to broadcasting stations be accompanied by a copy of the lyrics in each track so that disc jockeys could better identify which songs would be appropriate to play on the air. While some broadcasting stations and their owners shared the PMRC and Mr. Fritts' concerns, record companies and their artists were not as excited. The President of Warner Brothers Records, Lenny Waronker, was quoted in the *Los Angeles Times* as saying that the PMRC's call to action "...smells of censorship."

Down the line, the PMRC gained a friendly, but anonymous, ally inside the music industry. This ally suggested that they set up a meeting with Stan Gortikov of the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA). The RIAA is a trade group that represents many major record companies, making them a very important group for the PMRC to contact. The strategy that the PMRC came up with to convince the RIAA to address the content of music and music videos, which Mrs. Gore outlined in her book, was relatively simple:

*We felt it was crucial to publicize the excesses in song lyrics and video, the source of our concern. We were convinced that most parents are either unaware of the trends in rock music, or uncertain what to do about them. We decided to get the word out and build a consumer movement to put pressure on the industry. From the start, we recognized that the only solution would involve some voluntary action on the part of the industry. We*
wanted industry leaders to assume direct corporate responsibility for their products. The problem was to persuade an industry profiting from excesses to exercise some self-restraint. (*Raising PG Kids in an X-Rated Society*, p. 22)

The RIAA and Mr. Gortikov would be instrumental in this plan because by convincing him to agree to some type of self restraint, other industry leaders would soon follow. One way to get the ball rolling on this strategy was to get on the airwaves and start a grass-roots campaign.

From June through November, letters were sent, meetings were held, and calls were made. The issue of musical song and video content quickly became a national issue. With articles published in dozens of magazines and newspapers, and in numerous television and radio appearances, the PMRC was gaining popularity among American parents. Meanwhile, Mr. Gortikov, who had been convinced of the PMRC’s stance, gave the founders a crash course on how the music industry worked.

The lesson is shared in Mrs. Gore’s book: “In a meeting with the PMRC in June 1985, he explained that the companies in the RIAA sell 85 percent of the recorded music in America. While the industry had considered a rating system, he said it would be too difficult to administer. The movie industry rates about 350 new films a year; the recording industry produces some 25,000 songs and 2,500 albums annually” (*Raising PG Kids in an X-Rated Society*, p. 25). The massive amount of songs and albums produced makes it clear that dealing with the record industry was no small task for the PMRC to face.

In August 1985, rock n roll artist Frank Zappa, who would later cross paths with Tipper Gore on Capitol Hill, commented on the PMRC and its “Washington Wives” in an issue of *Cash Box* Magazine. In his comment, he observed that most of
the founders of the PMRC were married to prominent politicians, and as such they should not get involved in “hobby politics” (Raising PG Kids in an X-Rated Society, p. 25). He said that the PMRC’s case was without any merit and should be dismissed as “fundamentalist frogwash” (Raising PG Kids in an X-Rated Society, p. 26). Mr. Zappa was not the only one to stand up against the PMRC and claim censorship as the PMRC’s aim. John Cougar Mellencamp, Daryl Hall, and Gold Mountain Records president Danny Goldberg also took up the flag.

At a second meeting with Stan Gortikov on May 31, 1985, a letter signed by sixteen wives of U.S. representatives and senators was presented (Appendix C). Over the following months, negotiations were worked out between the RIAA and PMRC. The first request of the PMRC was for a categorical rating system with an “R” to designate lyrics that were explicit in one of several ways. The suggestion to make printed lyrics a requirement with every album was also suggested, so as to better inform customers of what types of lyrics were in each album. By this time, the United States Congress began to be interested in the issue of “pornographic rock” and “music censorship”, so a meeting with the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee was arranged in September of 1985.

The Hearing

In a room on Capitol Hill, the Parents Music Resource Center and three music artists gathered to air out their opinions on the matter of “pornographic rock” and “censorship”. For the PMRC, founders Tipper Gore, Susan Baker, Pamela Howar, Sally Nevius, and Jeff Ling were present. For the music industry, John Denver, Frank
Zappa, and Dee Snider of Twisted Sister were present. At the beginning of the hearing the Committee Chairman, Senator John Danforth, stressed "the reason for this hearing is not to promote any legislation...but simply to provide a forum for airing the issue itself, for ventilating the issue, for bringing it out of the public domain" (Hearing Before the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, United States Senate Ninety-Ninth Congress, First Session on Contents of Music and the Lyrics of Records, September 19, 1985, p. 1) (Appendix D). Senator Danforth went on to say that he understood that the reason the issue needed to be aired was because of the availability of explicit music to teenagers and young children. He viewed the PMRC's suggestion for a record labeling system as reasonable, but acknowledged that the purpose of the hearing was not to offer suggestions, but rather to air out the issue so that it could be brought to the attention of the American citizens. After a short explanation to those presenting about their statements and evidence being automatically entered into the hearing record, he offered a warning to anyone watching or witnessing the hearing in person that there was the probability of colorful words and situations being addressed out loud and in detail. He then asked that the witnesses involved in the hearings that day to offer their facts and truths to the best of their abilities, while keeping in mind the time constraint and standard that is attached to a senatorial committee hearing.

In her testimony to the committee (Appendix E), Susan Baker began with a brief background on why the Parents Music Resource Center was formed and its goal "to educate and inform parents about this alarming trend (in popular music) as well as to ask the industry to exercise self-restraint" (Hearing, p. 11). She then went
into how it was the belief of the PMRC that music and the freedom of a teenager to choose what music they listen to was their own right, as well as a large part of their identity. However, the PMRC believed that since music had such a large influence on teenagers, and since music was almost constantly playing, it was the duty of the industry to monitor what kinds of themes and situations are being sung about, as it could lead to the indoctrination of negative actions in those listening to it. Mrs. Baker went on to explain that popular albums of the day have an alarmingly high trend of discussing violence towards women (and violence in general), drug use, occult references, suicide, and sexual situations. She cited Prince’s song “Darling Nikki” from his record *Purple Rain*, Mötley Crüe’s album *Shout At The Devil*, Quiet Riot’s *Metal Health*, and an unnamed Judas Priest album, each record selling in the millions. She cited the growing rates of suicide, rape, and teen pregnancy (with no accompanying proof that the statistics are, in fact, accurate).

After going into more detail about the types of songs that encourage these types of actions, Mrs. Baker gave the floor to Tipper Gore so she could offer up a solution to the problem that the PMRC approved. The suggestion offered up by Mrs. Gore and the PMRC was a generic label that alerted potential buyers that there were explicit lyrics in the album they were looking at. The recording companies would together create a panel to set the criteria for what would earn an album the label, but the usage of the label itself would be completely voluntary. The PMRC also asked that companies make the lyrics available for the labeled albums at the record stores, allowing customers to read exactly what lyrics and songs are offensive in the album. Next, Mrs. Gore defended the PMRC’s requests and actions as being far from
censorship of music. She stated: "A voluntary labeling is not censorship. Censorship replies restricting access or suppressing content. This proposal does neither" (Hearing, p. 13). She also stressed that the PMRC was not asking for government intervention of any kind, and would prefer that none be taken. The belief of the PMRC was that the excesses that had come to be in the music industry must to be solved by the industry that allowed them to develop in the first place. The PMRC acknowledged that there would always be tensions in a free society, particularly when it came to the freedoms and responsibilities of such a society. However, explicit lyrics were just a small part of a bigger picture, and the PMRC asked only that the music industry be mindful of the impression its music made on children and teenagers, and that it also take responsibility for the excesses that had already developed.

After Mrs. Gore finished her section of the PMRC statement, the floor was given to Jeff Ling, who went over the themes of violence and sexuality that were found in music videos, lyrics, and albums. Mr. Ling shared with the committee a slideshow that showed examples of album covers that promoted sex and violence. He also shared a story about a man named Steve Boucher, who committed suicide while listening to AC/DC’s ‘Shoot to Thrill’. Another young man in San Antonio, Texas supposedly hung himself while listening to the very same song. Mr. Ling stated that suicide rates among youth were on the rise in the United States, and said that there was a link between the popularity of rock n roll music and suicide, with many rock stars inadvertently encouraging teenagers to believe that suicide was the only option. He continued to go through various songs and albums in which suicide
is supposedly featured. The rest of his statement, and the questions from the Committee to the PMRC representatives, can be read in Appendix E.

The first music artist to make a statement in response to the PMRC's demands was Frank Zappa. Zappa began his statement (Appendix F) by sharing that he had been in another room listening to what he called "conflicting reports" involving at least one member of the Commerce Committee and the idea of legislation to police the music industry. The Chairman asked that Zappa concentrate on his testimony instead, but Zappa explained that the stance of the senator in question was important to his testimony because it changed whether or not he was addressing the idea of legislation being written or not. Luckily, Senator Exon decided to humor Zappa and offered up that he had become interested in the idea of legislation being passed in regards to the topic. Zappa took this into account, and after he thanked Senator Exon, he started his statement to the committee. He first cited, for the benefit of any foreign press in the room, the First Amendment of the Constitution, so that it was understood what, in his mind, was the reference for his defense and statement. The brunt of his feelings toward the issue were given after he shared the literature of the First Amendment: "The PMRC proposal is an ill-conceived piece of nonsense which fails to deliver any real benefits to children, infringes on the civil liberties of people who are not children, and promises to keep the courts busy for years dealing with the interpretational and enforcemental [sic] problems inherent in the proposal's design" (Hearing, p. 52). He went on to say that no one forced Mrs. Baker and Mrs. Gore to bring albums like Purple Rain into their homes, that they had the freedom to choose whether or not they bought albums
such as these or other alternatives for their children. The Blank Tape Tax, or HR 2911, was cited by Zappa as being a bargaining chip which sold away the rights of composers, performers, and retailers that were part of the RIAA, as passing the bill was beneficial to the top dogs in the industry, but it could only be done by helping the PMRC; this is where those connections of the “Washington Wives” and their congressmen husbands seemingly came into play. Zappa then questioned if the issue was really an issue at all, and if it was proper that the husband of one of the PMRC wives also just so happened to be a member of the very committee that conducted business that pertained to the Blank Tape Tax or the lobbying of the PMRC. Could this really mean that any of the hearings could remain unbiased and fair if some of the people involved were also going home together at the end of the night? If the parents that who are concerned with exposure to lyrics like those expressed in “Sugar Walls”, Zappa argued that they should then contribute to music appreciation programs so that their children are exposed to more uplifting music. The children have a right to know that more than pop music—which, fun fact, can be described simply as “popular music”—exists. Zappa found it unfortunate that the PMRC would rather spend its time attempting to “governmentally sanitize” heavy metal music rather than invest in more uplifting forms of music appreciation, which begs the question, do they really care about what their children are listening to or are they just trying to raise a ruckus and gain some attention, perhaps in order to gain political exposure and favor? Zappa also wondered out loud if the PMRC, by not investing in these programs, was providing an indication of “the low priority this administration has placed on education for the arts in America” (Hearing, p. 54). The
next observation Zappa made was about how opening the door to a rating system could lead to other “parades” of moral quality control. If the Christian-based PMRC did not want their children exposed to Zionist doctrines, would they then demand that any albums written or performed by Jews have a big, yellow “J” on them (which is indicative of the Star of David that the Jewish people had to wear during the Holocaust so as to decipher who was or was not Jewish)? Zappa also asked if, by creating this record rating system, it would end up condemning the music artists affected by forcing them to wear a sort of “scarlet letter” as part of their stigmatization. To Zappa, “bad facts make bad law”, and that is exactly what was involved in this “witch hunt”.

The second music artist to give a statement was John Denver (Appendix G). In the beginning of his statement, he gave a thank you to the Committee for letting him share his opinion with them, and by extension, people around the country and the world. Denver stated quite clearly that he found the idea of a ratings system to be approaching censorship, which he was opposed to. As part of the statement, Denver also listed two examples of times when a movie of his and a song of his were banned or not advertised because they were misinterpreted. He pointed out that self-restraint can be an effective way to deal with the issue at hand. However, when a government enforces restrictions through a governmental “watchdog” it is no longer effective; it then becomes suppression. In a bold statement, Denver compared suppression of the kind being introduced by the PMRC to Nazi Germany. “Mr. Chairman, the suppression of the people of a society begins in my mind with the censorship of the written or spoken word. It was so in Nazi Germany. It is so in
many places today where those in power are afraid of the consequences of an informed and educated people” (Hearing, p. 65). Another point that Denver made in his statement was that when something was denied from someone, a great deal of energy was spent trying to get whatever was being denied. He also expressed that when it comes down to it, he believed that the real problem was parents’ willingness to take responsibility for their children’s upbringing, interests, needs, and the influence that they have on them. Denver ended his statement with a more personal reflection. He stated that he believed that teenagers—some of whom he had talked to—who wanted to commit suicide were doing it not because of the music they were listening to.

Finally, Dee Snider of Twisted Sister gave his statement to the Committee (Appendix H). The brunt of Snider’s statement revolved around the PMRC’s attacks on his band in particular, as it was his band that was directly attacked by the PMRC. He listed three of the accusations and his counterpoints for each one. The first accusation was that his song “Under the Blade” was about sadomasochism, bondage, and rape. This accusation came from statements made by PMRC chairperson Tipper Gore. Snider argued that these are not the themes in the song, but rather, the theme is surgery and the fear that it causes people. He also pointed out that the lyrics she quoted are out of order and pieced together in a way that made them sound violent. He cited this as being “curious” because Twisted Sister always made a point to print the lyrics of their songs on the inner sleeve of each album. The second accusation that was made against Twisted Sister was that the song “We’re Not Gonna Take It”—which appeared on the PMRC’s list, The Filthy Fifteen, a list of the most lyrically
blatant songs in popular music at the time (Appendix I)—was an example of a song that deserved a "V" rating for lyrical violence. Snider explained that the lyrics of the song have no violence sung about or implied and that the music video that accompanies the song was inspired by various Roadrunner and Wile E. Coyote episodes. He then shared with the Committee that the United Way of America had requested, and was granted, use of portions of the music video because of the lighthearted approach it took towards communicating with teenagers. The third accusation addressed was that Tipper Gore had made a statement at a public forum in New York the week before where she said that kids wore t-shirts with Twisted Sister's name and a woman in a compromising position on them. This Snider said, was an outright lie by Mrs. Gore. Not only had Twisted Sister never sold a shirt like that, but they also steered clear of any sexism in their shows, merchandise, and albums. Snider ended his statement by agreeing with the PMRC and national PTA on one point: that it is the duty of parents to monitor what their kids see, hear, and watch. However, Snider also said that the PMRC's job should not go beyond reminding parents of this duty.

Outcomes of the Hearing

After the hearing of the Senate Commerce Committee, the agreement that the PMRC and RIAA had agreed upon before the hearings went into effect. It was decided that the PMRC would make a policy statement about explicit lyrics and would drop the uniform standard request. Also, there would be a generic warning
label—the "Explicit Lyrics – Parental Advisory" stickers that we see today, nicknamed “Tipper Stickers”—applied to any albums with explicit lyrics, instead of the R rating that was originally requested by the PMRC. On 1 November 1985, the PMRC, National PTA, and the RIAA announced the agreement in a joint press conference in Washington. This did not put an end to the debate, however, and the conversation over the “Tipper Stickers” and music censorship continued to be a popular issue to discuss, with many of those present at the hearings going on to talk about the topic in many different types of forums.

**Conclusion**

The question must be asked: why is studying this event important to the study of government? What makes this senatorial committee hearing so different from any other hearing? Could it be the interesting connection between the members of the PMRC and the committee itself? Or, perhaps, the fact that music stars were involved in a governmental matter? With issues such as the monitoring of controversial music by the government, where is the line between freedom of speech and a screening process to be drawn? Should we, as citizens, be worried that the "Explicit Advisory – Parental Advisory" stickers may open the door to other forms of monitoring? As both Zappa and Denver addressed in their statements, could this "censorship" lead to labels being put on a Jewish performer’s album, thus encouraging suppression over certain types of speech and messages? Finally, is this really censorship at all, or an honest attempt to represent the interests of constituents?
Appendix

Appendix A – “Strange Fruit” by Billie Holiday

Southern trees bear strange fruit
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root
Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees

Pastoral scene of the gallant south
The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth
Scent of magnolias, sweet and fresh
Then the sudden smell of burning flesh

Here is fruit for the crows to pluck
For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck
For the sun to rot, for the trees to drop
Here is a strange and bitter crop

Courtesy of Google Play Music
Written by Lewis Allan, Maurice Pearl, Dwayne P Wiggins • Copyright © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc

Appendix B – Letter from Eddie Fitts, president of the National Association of Broadcasters, to radio station owners on behalf of the PMRC

The lyrics of some recent rock records and the tone of their related music videos are fast becoming a matter of public debate. The subject has drawn national attention through articles in publications like Newsweek and USA Today and feature reports on TV programs like “Good Morning, America.”

Many state that they are extremely troubled by the sexually explicit and violent language of some of today’s songs...

The pre-teen and teen audiences are heavy listeners, viewers and buyers of rock music. In some communities, like Washington, D.C., parents and other interested citizens are organizing to see what they can do about the music in question, which at least one writer was dubbed “porn rock.”

I wanted you, as one of the leaders in the broadcasting industry, to be aware of this situation...

It is, of course, up to each broadcast licensee to make its own decisions as to the manner in which it carries out its programming responsibilities under the Communications Act.

Appendix C – Letter signed by sixteen wives U.S. Representatives and Senators presented to Stan Gortikov, President of the RIAA, by the PMRC

It is our concern that some of the music which the recording industry sells today increasingly portrays explicit sex and violence, and glorifies the use of drugs and alcohol. It is indiscriminately available to persons of any age through record stores and the media.

These messages reach young children and early teenagers at a crucial age when they are developing lifelong value systems. Their minds are often not yet discerning enough to reject the destructive influences and anti-social behavior endangered by what they hear and see in these products.

Because of the excesses that exist in the music industry today, we petition the industry to exercise voluntary self-restraint perhaps by developing guidelines and/or a rating system, such as that of the movie industry, for use by parents in order to protect our younger children from such mature themes.


Appendix D – First Page of Hearing Document and Opening Statement by the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee Chairman

Appendix E – Statement by the PMRC to the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee and accompanying follow up questions

Appendix F – Statement by Frank Zappa to the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee and accompanying follow up questions

Appendix G – Statement by John Denver to the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee and accompanying follow up questions

Appendix H – Statement by Dee Snider to the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee and accompanying follow up questions

Appendix I – The Parents Music Resource Center’s “Filthy Fifteen” List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking #</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Offensive Lyrical Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Prince</td>
<td>“Darling Nikki”</td>
<td>Sex/Masturbation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sheena Easton</td>
<td>“Sugar Walls”</td>
<td>Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Judas Priest</td>
<td>“Eat Me Alive”</td>
<td>Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Vanity</td>
<td>“Strap on ‘Robbie Baby’”</td>
<td>Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mötley Crüe</td>
<td>“Bastard”</td>
<td>Violence/Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>AC/DC</td>
<td>“Let Me Put My Love Into You”</td>
<td>Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Twisted Sister</td>
<td>“We’re Not Gonna Take It”</td>
<td>Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Madonna</td>
<td>“Dress You Up”</td>
<td>Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>W.A.S.P.</td>
<td>“Animal (Fuck Like A Beast)”</td>
<td>Sex/Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Def Leppard</td>
<td>“High N' Dry (Saturday Night)”</td>
<td>Drug and Alcohol Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mercyful Fate</td>
<td>“Into the Coven”</td>
<td>Occult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Black Sabbath</td>
<td>“Trashed”</td>
<td>Drug and Alcohol Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Mary Jane Girls</td>
<td>“In My House”</td>
<td>Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Venom</td>
<td>“Possessed”</td>
<td>Occult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Cyndi Lauper</td>
<td>“She Bop”</td>
<td>Sex/Masturbation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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HEARING
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE,
SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
UNITED STATES SENATE
NINETY-NINTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION
ON
CONTENTS OF MUSIC AND THE LYRICS OF RECORDS
SEPTEMBER 19, 1985
Printed for the use of the
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
RECORD LABELING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1985

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:40 a.m., in room SR-253, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. John Danforth (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Staff members assigned to this hearing: Kathy Meier, staff counsel; Dale Brown, professional staff member; and Cheryl Wallace, minority staff counsel.

OPENING STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN. Ladies and gentlemen, this hearing is on the subject of the content of some, and I want to underscore the word "some," not all rock music, which it has been pointed out by a number of people as having really broken new ground as to the content of music and the lyrics that are used in music.

There have, I suppose, always been cases of songs that are suggestive in one way or another. However, certain rock music that is now being sold deals very explicitly with sexual subjects. Some music glorifies violence in various forms, sexual violence. Some music advocates the use of drugs, drug abuse, and so on.

And so, the reason for this hearing is not to promote any legislation. Indeed, I do not know of any suggestion that any legislation be passed. But to simply provide a forum for airing the issue itself, for ventilating the issue, for bringing it out in the public domain.

The concern is that the public at large should be aware of the existence of this kind of music, and the fact that it is now available to kids, and that kids of all ages are able to buy it.

It is my understanding that various private groups have been holding discussions with people who are in the music publishing and music industry to try to achieve some sort of understanding with respect to the labeling of records so that at least the whole family knows what is in them, and not just the child who buys the record.

That seems to me to be a reasonable suggestion, but the point of this hearing is not for me to make any particular suggestions, but to simply provide forum so that the whole issue can be brought to the attention of the American people.

I want to say a word about this hearing. We have a number of witnesses. They have all been given specific time limits for their testimony, as is always the case in Commerce Committee hearings.
It is going to be necessary for me to enforce those time limits strictly, and therefore I would ask the witnesses to do so voluntarily.

Your prepared text of your statements will be included in the record automatically. You don't even have to ask for permission for them to be in the record. They will be included in the record automatically, so you don't have to take some of your time asking permission. It will be done.

With respect to the content of the statements, to describe what is in the music that is in question, will, I am sure, require some witnesses to use words and describe things that will shock the sensitivities of many of us in this room, and many who are watching these proceedings on television, and I just wanted to warn you of that in advance so that if children have the TV on, their parents can know what is in store for them.

I want witnesses to be able to inform the Senate of their points of view and the facts as they know them. But I would also hasten to say to witnesses that when you go beyond description and needlessly use expressions that may be in bad taste, this is a hearing of a Senate committee, and this is the Government of the people of this country. It is really theirs, and I would hope that standards would be used to the extent possible in your discussions and in your testimony which bears that in mind.

Senator Hollings.

OPENING STATEMENT BY SENATOR HOLLINGS

Senator Hollings. Mr. Chairman, I first want to commend the Parents Music Resource Center for bringing this to the Nation's attention. I have had the opportunity to attend a showing, you might say, or presentation of this porn rock, as they call it. In the test of pornography, one of the things to look at is whether or not it has any redeeming social value. There could be an exception here, because having attended that presentation, the redeeming social value that I find is inaudible.

I have a hard time understanding it. Paul, since I traveled the country for 3 years, they said they could not understand me. Maybe I could make a good rock star. I do not know.

But in all candor, I would tell you it is outrageous filth, and we have got to do something about it. I take the tempered approach, of course, that music forms character and therefore plays an important part in determining social and political issues. In Plato's words, 'When modes of music change, the fundamental laws of the state change with them.'

Perhaps Daniel O'Connell, the 18th-century Irish nationalist, expressed it best when he said, "Let me write the songs of a nation, and I care not who makes its laws."

Our culture powerfully affects individual character. When we are constantly confronted by that which is coarse, we become coarsened. Repeated exposure to song lyrics describing rape, incest, sexual violence, and perversion is like sandpaper over the soul. It rubs raw one's sensibilities, resulting in a state of emotional numbness, in the words of George Will. One becomes literally demoralized.

Now, the subject of suggestive lyrics on a child may not be catastrophic. Rather, the emotional damage is more subtle. The effect on a troubled child, however, can be disastrous, pushing that child over the emotional precipice, and to the extent that individual attitudes are influenced, this becomes a very real social problem.

The linkage between experience, thought, and action necessarily leads to concern about the consequences for society, and it demands a response from each of us, not the self-appointed guardians of the national morality, as someone suggested, but as concerned citizens and leaders of a great and lasting republic.

To paraphrase John Donne, any man's death or harm diminishes me because I am involved in mankind. Likewise, we are all in-
There is no question about the message. I still hear art is art, and in America artists are supposed to be free to express themselves, out who has the responsibility to regulate? Parents? The music industry? The Government?

I speak as a legislator. I speak as a parent, a veteran who has brought three children through adolescence. I know the temptations dangled in front of teenagers and I know the frustrations parents experience all through this process. The sense of hopelessness when you get the feeling your child will not listen to you.

I believe it will be helpful before we proceed any further to get an idea of what it is we are talking about.

One criticism of the rock industry is the way it portrays violence in rock videos which are viewed by the kids. There are suggestions that the move to label rock albums be extended to videos as well. We do not watch much television. I am not sure how many of my colleagues get much opportunity to watch any of the music video shows now available on cable and free TV.

I brought along two videos from which to choose which I believe are representative of the kind of presentations which cause this problem. The first one is by the group Van Halen.[The video "Hot for Teacher" by Van Halen was shown.]

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Hawkins, just a minute.

Now, this is a very large crowd today. We have allowed people in beyond the capacity of this room. We are not going to have any demonstrations. No applause, no demonstrations of any kind.

Senator HAWKINS. I thank the chairman. The title of that tape was "Hot for Teacher."

The next video is by the group Twisted Sister, and we will show you a brief portion of that. This is a very popular video.[The video "We're Not Going to Take It" by Twisted Sister was shown.]

Senator HAWKINS. Mr. Chairman, I think a picture is worth a thousand words. This issue is too hot not to cool down. Parents are asking for assistance, and I hope we always remember that no success in life would compensate for failure in the home.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Hawkins, thank you very much.

The next witness is Susan Baker, Mrs. James Baker, from the Parents Music Resource Center.

Mrs. Baker, thank you very much for being with us. Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF SUSAN BAKER, PARENTS MUSIC RESOURCE CENTER, ACCOMPANIED BY PAMELA HOWAR, PRESIDENT; SALLY NEVIUS, TREASURER; TIPPER GORE AND JEFF LING

Mrs. Baker. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We would like to thank you and the committee for the opportunity to testify before you.

The CHAIRMAN. Could you please speak directly into the microphone, thank you.
There certainly are many causes for these ills in our society, but it is our contention that the pervasive messages aimed at children which promote and glorify suicide, rape, sadomasochism, and so on, have to be numbered among the contributing factors.

It seems to me that the music industry actually seem to encourage youth suicide. Ozzie Osbourne sings "Suicide Solution." Blue Oyster Cult sings "Don't Fear the Reaper." AC/DC sings "Shoot to Thrill." Just last week in Centerpoint, a small Texas town, a young man took his life while listening to the music of AC/DC. He was not the first.

Now that more and more elementary school children are becoming consumers of rock music, we think it is imperative to discuss this question. What can be done to help parents who want to protect their children from these messages if they want to?

Today parents have no way of knowing the content of music products that their children are buying. While some album covers are sexually explicit or depict violence, many others give no clue as to the content. One of the top 10 today is Morris Day and the Time, "Jungle Love." If you go to buy the album "Ice Cream Castles" to get "Jungle Love," you also get, "If the Kid Can't Make You Come, Nobody Can," a sexually explicit song.

The pleasant cover picture of the members of the band gives no hint that it contains material that is not appropriate for young consumers.

Our children are faced with so many choices today. What is available to them through the media is historically unique. The Rosenberg Commission study on television is available to them through the media is historically unique. The Rosenberg Commission study on television is available today. Todar the element of violence and sexuality has exploded in rock music in an unprecedented way. Many albums today include songs that encourage suicide, violent revenge, sexual violence, and violence just for violence's sake.

I will cover the themes of violence and sexuality. Bear in mind that what you are about to see and hear is a small sample of the material available today. Today the element of violent, brutal erotica has exploded in rock music in an unprecedented way. Many albums today include songs that encourage suicide, violent revenge, sexual violence, and violence just for violence's sake.

This is Steve Boucher. Steve died while listening to AC/DC's "Shoot to Thrill." Steve fired his father's gun into his mouth.

A few days ago I was speaking in San Antonio. The day before I arrived, they buried a young high school student. This young man had taken his tape deck to the football field.

He hung himself while listening to AC/DC's "Shoot to Thrill." Suicide has become epidemic in our country among teenagers.

Some 6,000 will take their lives this year. Many of these young people find encouragement from some rock stars who present death as a positive, almost attractive alternative.
The album I am holding up in front of you is by the band Metallica. It is on Electra Asylum records. A song on this album is called "Faith in Black." It says the following. "I have lost the will to live. Simply nothing more to give. There is nothing more for me. I need the end to set me free."

"Death greets me warm. I will just say good-bye."

Consider the self-destructive violence that is encouraged in their song "Whiplash." "Bang your head against the stage like you never have before. Make it rain, make it bleed, make it really sore. In a frenzied madness, now is the time to let it rip, to let it fucking loose. We are gathered here to maim and kill, for this is what we choose."

Ozzie Osbourne on his first solo album, shown here, sings a song called "Suicide Solution." Ozzy insists that he in no way encourages suicidal behavior in young people, and yet he appears in photos such as these in periodicals that are geared toward the young teenage audience.

For those of you who cannot make that out because of the lights, it is a picture of Ozzie with a gun barrel stuck into his mouth.

This is the cover of Twisted Sister's high selling LP for Atlantic Records called "Stay Hungry." An example of Twisted Sister's appeal to young people is evident in the back to school contest being run by MTV. First prize is a get together with Twisted Sister. The first prize is a meeting with Twisted Sister.

The hit song from the album, "We're Not Going to Take It," was released as a video, which you saw just a moment ago, a video in which the band members proceed to beat up daddy, who will not let them rock. Their first album, which has been rereleased by Atlantic Records, is called "Under the Blade."

The title song includes words like "Your hands are tied, your legs are spread, you are going under the blade." In lyrics from the song "Shoot them Down," the band sings, "They think we are fools who want to make their own rules. It only gets us madder. They think they are hot. Well, I say they're not. They shoot us down for fun. If they don't want to play, then let's make them play! Shoot them down with a fucking gun."

This is the cover of AC/DC's brand new album for Atlantic Records, "Fly on the Wall."

One of the songs from the album "Back in Business" was released as a single for airplay and included the words, "Don't you struggle or try to bite. You want some trouble. I am the king of vice. I am a wrecking ball. I am a stinging knife. Steal your money. Going to take your life."

Of course, AC/DC is no stranger to violent material. Their song "Squealer" contained the following. "She said she had never been before, and I don't think she'll ball no more. Fixed her, balled before, and I don't think she'll ball no more."

One of their fans I know you are aware of is the accused Night Stalker.

Judas Priest sings of violent rape in their song "Eat Me Alive," from their Columbia Records release "Defenders of the Faith." "Squealing in passion as the rod of steel injects. Gut wrenching frenzy that deranges every joint. I am going to force you at gunpoint to eat me alive."

The band Great White in their album "On Their Knees" sings these words "Knocking down your door, going to pull you to the floor, taking what I choose, never going to lose, going to drive my love inside you, going to nail your ass to the floor."

This is Motley Crue. Their albums for Electra Asylum sell millions, and they are one of the top 10 grossing concert bands this year. Their albums include songs like "Bastard." "Out goes the light. In goes my knife. Pull out his life. Consider that bastard dead."

"Live Wire." "I will either break her face or take down her legs. Get my ways at will. Go for the throat and never let loose. Going in for the kill."

And "Too Young to Fall in Love." "Not a woman, but a whore. I can taste the hate. Hell, now I am killing you. Watch your face turning blue."

This is the cover of the new album by the band Abattoir. The title song is about a homicidal maniac, and notice on the cover the arms of the man wrapped around the woman. In one hand is a long knife. The other hand holds a hook being pressed against the woman's breast.

This is the cover of an album entitled "Rise of the Mutants" by the band Impaler.

Notice the man with the bloody meat in his mouth and hand. He is kneeling over the bloody arm of a woman.

The back cover shows a woman with a bloody face at the feet of the drummer.

While both of these albums were released on independent labels as opposed to major labels, they are reviewed and featured in teen rock magazines and are available in local record stores.

This band, WASP, recently signed a $1.5 million contract with Capital Records. This is their first release. The capital item is entitled "The Torture Never Stops." Violence permeates the album as well as their stage show, which has included chopping up and throwing raw meat into the audience.

Drinking blood from a skull.

And until recently the simulated rape and murder of a half-nude woman.

This single is available in record stores across the country. The cover features the cod piece that lead singer Blackie Lawless wears on stage. In this picture, there is blood dripping down his stomach, hands, and off of the blade between his legs. The song that accompanies this photo is "FUCK LIKE A BEAST."

This band, Piledriver, fuses together the elements of sexual violence and occult in the song "Lust." I forgot. It is right here in front of me. The song is called "Lust." The lyrics say, "Hell on fire. Lust, desire. The devil wants to stick you in. The devil wants to lick you. He wants your body. He wants your spirit. Naked twisting bodies, sweating. Prince of darkness. Prince of evil. Spread your legs and scream. This is no dream. Degradation. Humiliation. Thrusting, shoving. Animals humping. He is like a dog in heat. You are just another piece of meat. Craving demons fill you with pain. Now you are bloody and stained, hurt and beaten. He will possess you. He will molest you. Sex with Satan. Sex with Satan."
While we will not consider the subject in depth at this time, it should be noted that occultic themes, primarily Satanism, is prevalent among such bands as Slayer, Venom, and Merciful Fate, one of whose albums is shown in this picture.

Let us move on to sexuality, a theme which has been part of rock music since its beginning. Today's rock artists are describing sexual activity and practice in terms more graphic than ever before. Many of you are aware of Purple Rain, the multimillion seller by Prince. Much has been said about the song "Darling Nikki" from the album, "I met a girl named Nikki. I guess you could say she was a sex fiend. I met her in a hotel lobby masturbating with magazines."

Another album by Prince called "Dirty Mind" presents a positive attitude toward the subject of incest.

These lyrics are from the song called "Sister." "I was only 16, but I guess that is no excuse. My sister was 32, and kind of alone. My sister never made love to anyone but me. Incest is everything it's said to be."

"This is the cover of the album "Stakk Attakk" by the band Wrath Child. The back cover of this album, which is available to young children in record stores, included this photo of a nude woman on the back of the album. Songs include "Sweet Surrender," "I lick my lips and make advances. You lay on down and let me in. But you can't fight. You've got no choice. I will take you down and rub my cream in."

Another song on an earlier album called "Cock Rock Shock" said the words "We are going to fuck you" and "Oh, you fucking bitch."

This is Motley Crue's album, "Shout at the Devil," double platinum. The song on the album we are concerned with here is "Ten Seconds to Love." "Touch my gun, but don't pull my trigger. Shine my pistol some more. Here I come. Reach down real low. Slide it in real slow. You feel so good. Do you want some more? I have got one more shot. My gun is still warm!"

The band KISS, popular with young people, "At All Times," their brandnew album, was released just yesterday, includes songs such as "Fit Like a Glove." "Ain't a cardinal sin, baby. Let me in. Girl, I am going to treat you right. Well, goodness sakes, my snake's alive, and it is ready to bite. Baby, let me in. It fits like a glove. I think I am going to burst. When I go through her it is like a hot knife through butter."

And the song, "Give Me More." "Hot blood, need your love. Hard as rock, can't get enough. Want to feel you deep inside, pumping through my veins. Fill you to the core, like a dog to the bone. Make you sweat, make you moan. Come on, lick my candy cane."

This is Betsy. She is the lead singer of a band called Bitch. The album is called "Be My Slave." It is available in record stores. One of the songs is called "Give Me a Kiss." "The way you grab me makes my knees shake. The way you pull my arms makes my body quake. The way you yank my hair, it just makes me want to kill you. I will take off my clothes. Kick me in the shins. Come on and slap me in the face, and I will get down on my knees and move you like this."

And the song "Leatherbound." "The whip is my toy. Nandas are your joy. You hold me down, and I am screaming for more. When you tie me up and gag me, the way you give me pain, come on, give me lashes."

The Rolling Stones on their album "Under Cover" also sang of sadomasochistic activities in the song "Tie You Up." "The pain of love, you dream of it, passion it. You even get a rise from it. Feel the hot cum dripping on your thigh from it. Why so divine, the pain of love."

Even the Jacksons' mainstream pop music today, their song, "Torture," was released as a video, and was shown on national TV. That video included pictures of women dressed in leather bondage, masks, with whips in their hands, in chains, and wrapped up in handcuffs. Some artists take their pornographic rock to the stage. This is a picture of Wendy O'Williams in concert. Concerts that young adolescents can attend.
The CHAIRMAN. I am sorry. Your time has expired.

Mrs. Gore. Let me begin by asking you, have you children, I understand.

Mrs. GORE. Yes, I do, four children, 12, 8, 6, and 2.

The CHAIRMAN. Does the 12-year-old buy records?

Mrs. Gore. Yes, she does, and she has been buying them since she was 7 or 8. Not a lot, but occasionally.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you have any way of knowing what is on the records that she buys?

Mrs. GORE. No, I do not have any way of knowing that.

The CHAIRMAN. There is nothing on the face of the album which would notify you if the record has pornographic material or material glorifying violence?

Mrs. GORE. No, there is nothing that would suggest that to me at this time.

The CHAIRMAN. And it would be unrealistic, wouldn't it, for a parent to go into the record store and play the record in its entirety to find out what the words are?

Mrs. GORE. Well, it is. Normally you are not allowed to open a record and play it until after you have purchased it.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, Mr. Ling, you pointed out at the beginning of your presentation that you do know of a couple of cases where kids have committed suicide while listening to rock music that advocates suicide.

Do you believe that those are rare cases of rock music influencing behavior, or do you think that it is more commonplace? In other words, do you think that this music is tasteful, but that it really does not have very much effect, or do you think that the music has some negative consequences?

Mr. LING. I think it has great effect. As one who has worked with teenagers and college students on a professional level for the last 10 years, I have watched the things that they have watched, and listened to what they have listened to. I have seen their behavior influenced and encouraged by this music.

More importantly, sir, the problem is that the music might reflect the behavior, attitudes, values of those in the 18 or older bracket. However, when that music is listened to by 12-year-olds, 11-year-olds, and 10-year-olds, it moves from the area of being a reinforcer and an encourager into the role of educator, and many of these young children are being educated in these things before they have any kind of frame of reference to properly put it in.

The CHAIRMAN, Senator Gore.

Senator Gore. Well, Mr. Chairman, a statement was submitted for the record from Dr. Thomas Ridecki which bears upon the question about whether or not behavior is influenced by music. If it is appropriate, I would like that to be included in the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection.

Senator Gore. I would just like to reinforce a couple of statements that were made in prepared testimony. I believe, Mr. Baker, you were saying that what you're proposing and what the group is proposing does not involve any request for Government action, is that correct?

Mrs. BAKER. That's right.

Senator Gore. When you responded to the Chairman a minute ago, you said there is no way you can tell if the record has pornographic material or material glorifying violence. In fact, some of the material has an album cover design which will indicate it, but some does not. Is that correct?

Mrs. GORE. That is correct. Some of the album covers are very explicit. In fact, they look like they should be in Playboy or Penthouse, some of them, and they are in the record bins available to young children. But others, you can not tell.

I bought the "Purple Rain" album for our 11-year-old and I did not know that "Darling Nikki" was on it, and I felt that it was inappropriate for her and her 8- and 6-year-old sisters to hear a song describing a girl masturbating in a hotel lobby with a magazine. I had no warning. In fact, all I knew was that Prince was the new creative teen idol on the scene and had just received a Grammy Award. So I would have appreciated it if I had known that before purchase.

Senator Gore. Well, I appreciate that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN, Senator Rockefeller.

Senator Rockefeller. It does not matter to me who answers this question, but there is a difference between the material that Mr. Ling presented and the videotapes that we viewed earlier. For example, I thought that the presentation that your particular panel made was much more to the point than the previous presentation. It was not only graphic and shocking, but there was not any question as to where to draw the line.

If something is graphic, does that cross the line? Does it have to be explicit? I understand, that 80 record companies have agreed to conform to the labeling principle.

Where should the line be drawn as to what is fantasy, which is disturbing to a parent and yet is not as dangerous as something which is graphic, explicit, and clearly dangerous to teens and preteens with vulnerable, unformed values?

One cannot stop everything. The companies, you are saying, are going to have to make the judgment. In your conversations with them, how do they define the line that should not be crossed?

Mrs. GORE. In our conversations with Mr. Gortikov, he has made it clear that this is a difficult area. We suggested that the industry appoint an industry-wide panel of some consumer representatives one time to discuss the set of criteria that would be used.

It would not be a list of words. It would be simply a policy statement, such as, we will be sensitive to lyrics that talk about graphic brutality toward women, violence, rape, explicit sexuality. We believe that the record companies and those individuals within those companies are best left to make those subjective decisions. There will always be areas of gray, but what we want from them is an affirmation that they will be sensitive to this concern as they individually apply a warning label within their individual companies.

We need for them to be able to get together and say, we will do this in good faith, we will go back to our individual companies, we will make those subjective decisions and judgments ourselves. That is what we are asking them to do.
Senator ROCKEFELLER. Do you think the record companies had been planning on doing this before you all approached them? I mean, this business has been going on, MTV and all the rest of it, for some time now.

I do not know how long you have been in existence, but the problem is bad and apparently getting worse. It brings to the fore the terror that exists on the part of all parents, and goes to the whole question of what it is that our children are learning and seeing that confronts us every day.

Was this simply the result of your conversations with them, that they suddenly agreed to decide to do some labeling?

Mrs. BAKER. Senator, over a year and a half ago the National PTA passed a resolution and wrote to the music industry, direct recording industry, asking them to label sexually explicit, violent, profane, or material that encouraged the use of drugs and alcohol. And that, as far as I know, got no response from the industry.

But there have been calls for this sort of thing. Some, very few but some, albums have been labeled as objectionable to some people. So there has been a little bit of this done in the industry in the past, but it has been very small. And our hope is that there would be a uniform application across the board in the recording industry to give parents and consumers warning when explicit, blatant, violent material is in the album or any music product.

Senator ROCKEFELLER. Those companies which are declining to go along with labeling, which I take it to be about 20 percent of the volume, what are they giving as reasons for not going along?

Mrs. BAKER. Senator, over a year and a half ago the National PTA passed a resolution and wrote to the music industry, direct recording industry, asking them to label sexually explicit, violent, profane, or material that encouraged the use of drugs and alcohol. And that, as far as I know, got no response from the industry.

We have been speaking with Stanley Gortikov, who is head of the Recording Industry Association of America, and he represents the majority of companies that produce the majority of records. And so I could not speak to that.

Senator ROCKEFELLER. Is there any serious doubt with serious people to whom you have talked that there is a direct relationship between violence and disturbing tendencies and occurrences among young people and the proliferation of this type of material that we have seen this morning. Is there any serious doubt that there is not a direct relationship between those two?

Or are there some who would argue that you are simply trying to suppress first amendment rights?

Senator Gore. Yes, that is correct. We do not want legislation to remedy this problem. The problem is one that developed in the marketplace. The music industry has allowed the excesses that you saw this morning, some of which was personally offensive to me and other things that were not. We all have our own individual goals, I guess, and how we view those.

I guess a key question that I would like to ask you is, if there is one thing that has come through loud and clear to me at least, it is that you do not want Federal legislation and you do not want Federal regulation, at least at this time. Is that correct?

Senator EXON. When you say legislation, do you also include the term that I use, regulation?

Senator Gore. Yes.

Senator EXON. Well, given that and given what I think I tried to put forth as my feelings on this, Mr. Chairman, I suppose it is nice to have these hearings and discuss these things, because I think it is a concern. But I wonder, Mr. Chairman, if we are not talking about Federal regulation and we are not talking about Federal legislation, what is the reason for these hearings in front of the Commerce Committee?

Can anyone answer that? I did not schedule these hearings. I am glad to be here to take part in them. But sometimes I wonder why these media events are scheduled and for what possible reason, if we are not being asked to do anything about it.

The CHAIRMAN. I think that the point is that there are problems that exist in the country that are not necessarily solved by legis-
Senator Exon. Well, Mr. Chairman, that may well be and that may well be an intention of what the Congress should or should not do. As one member of the Congress, I think that we indulge in too many publicity events that are far beyond the scope of regulation and legislation, which I think is our primary purpose.

The Chairman. Senator Kasten.

Senator Kasten. Mr. Chairman, thank you. I have no questions at this time.

The Chairman. Senator Hawkins?

Senator Hawkins. Mrs. Baker, this is one Senator who feels that there is no absolute right to free speech. It has been my experience no one has the absolute right to yell “Fire” in a theater which is not on fire.

I believe no one has the right to poison our children with the kinds of lyrics that you have shown this committee so graphically today.

And to get back to my original tenet, I would like to know, in your experiences as mothers, where did your children first hear of the record that they asked for the money to purchase? Did they hear that on MTV? Did they see the videotape preview on MTV? Or was it on a radio station?

Mrs. Baker. Well, my 8 year old hears music on her clock-radio. I mean, she does not have tapes and records at this stage in her life, but she does listen to the radio.

Senator Hawkins. And from that she decides she would like the entire album?

Mrs. Baker. Yes, that is right.

Senator Hawkins. So the original exposure to this kind of—I cannot think of a good word for it, but pornography rock—would be through the public airwaves, whether it be MTV or a radio station?

Mrs. Baker. Well, Senator, I will say this, that basically most broadcasters are very responsible. There are a few hard rock stations that play things that are pornographic, but basically your main stations do not play the worst offenders.

They will play a song on an album that will get into the top 40 and maybe have some violence or sexually explicit lyrics on the album. They will not play, generally, a song that is sexually explicit.

Times are changing, though, because recently Sheena Easton’s “Sugar Walls,” which is really a fairly graphic song about female genital arousal, has been on the charts and it is played 10 to 12 times a day. That is one of our concerns, that this is becoming more and more mainstream, and we feel this is the time to talk about it.

Senator Hawkins. And if the labeling took place as you have requested, do you envision that prior to the disc jockey playing that on the radio that he would read the label?

Mrs. Baker. Well, I will tell you. All program directors know exactly what they are playing on their records. They do not need a label to know that. That is part of their business and that is part of their job, and they exactly know what they are playing.

So I would say that it is not going to be a help for the program directors and DJs. It is going to be a help for parents. We are the ones that need the information. Those in the business know.

Senator Hawkins. And do you have certain stations that you do not allow your child to listen to in the home?

Mrs. Baker. Well, it has not come to that in my house, with just an 8 year old. The big ones, you know, that is another matter. But most of them are grown and they can make their own decisions about that.

This is for the young. She is not—the heavy metals is not something. It is others that she likes to listen to.

Senator Hawkins. Well, it is my understanding it is no longer possible to have a successful rock album without a video; that MTV is widely viewed by children, whether their parents are home or not.

Has your group met with representatives of the TV industry?

Mrs. Baker. Yes, we have, and MTV was originally begun to promote records. I mean, that is the whole purpose of it. And there have been some really fun things done with MTV and some really awful things done. So we have talked with them, but we will meet with them again.

Senator Hawkins. What was their response?

Mrs. Baker. Well, their response was that they already had standards in place. We had thought that their standards should be a little tighter

Senator Hawkins. Well, it is my understanding it is no longer possible to have a successful rock album without a video; that MTV is widely viewed by children, whether their parents are home or not. Has your group met with representatives of the TV industry?

Senator Baker. Well, their response was that they already had standards in place. We had thought that their standards should be a little tighter for younger viewing audience. But we will be asking them to label videos that have violent or sexually explicit material in them, so that parents will know, and also to consider clustering very safe—“safe” is not a good word, but I mean harmless—videos at a time when the young audience would be viewing. So that would be our suggestion to them.

Senator Hawkins. And when are you meeting with them again?

Mrs. Baker. In the near future.

Senator Hawkins. Thank you.

The Chairman. Thank you very much for being here. I know that for all of you it was not the most pleasant of experiences to read some of the lyrics in public. But it was very helpful and we appreciate your attendance.

John Denver is on the witness list. He has had to leave the hearing room for another engagement. He plans to be back. So the next witness will be Mr. Frank Zappa.

Mr. Zappa, thank you very much for being with us. Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF FRANK ZAPPA. ACCOMPANIED BY LARRY STEIN, COUNSEL

Mr. Zappa. My name is Frank Zappa. This is my attorney Larry Stein from Los Angeles.

Can you hear me?

The Chairman. If you could speak very directly and clearly into the microphone, I would appreciate it.
tion or by regulation. Fortunately, the be-all and end-all of the United States is not legislation that is enacted by Congress.

I think the point of the hearings is to provide a forum for airing what a lot of people perceive of as a real problem. Senator Exon. Well, Mr. Chairman, that may well be and that may well be an intention of what the Congress should or should not do. As one member of the Congress, I think that we indulge in too many publicity events that are far beyond the scope of regulation and legislation, which I think is our primary purpose.

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Senator Hawkins. And do you have certain stations that you do not allow your child to listen to in the home?

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Mrs. Baker. Well, their response was that they already had it in place. We had thought that their standards should be.

Mrs. Baker. In the near future. Senator Hawkins. Thank you. The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much for being here. I know that for all of you it was not the most pleasant of experiences.

STATEMENT OF FRANK ZAPPA, ACCOMPANIED BY LARRY STEIN, COUNSEL

Mr. Zappa. My name is Frank Zappa. This is my attorney Larry Stein from Los Angeles.

Can you hear me? STEIN MICROPHONE!!!

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Senator Hawkins. And when are you meeting with them again?


The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much for being here. I know that for all of you it was not the most pleasant of experiences.

The next witness will be Mr. Frank Zappa.

Mr. Zappa, thank you very much for being with us. Please proceed.
Mr. Zappa. My name is Frank Zappa. This is my attorney Larry Stein.

The statement that I prepared, that I sent you 100 copies of, is five pages long, so I have shortened it down and am going to read a condensed version of it.

Certain things have happened. I have been listening to the event in the other room and have heard some conflicting reports as to whether or not people in this committee want legislation. I understand that Mr. Hollings does from his comments. Is that correct?

The CHAIRMAN. I think you had better concentrate on your testimony, rather than asking questions.

Mr. Zappa. The reason I need to ask it, because I have to change something in my testimony if there is not a clearcut version or whether or not legislation is what is being discussed here.

The CHAIRMAN. Do the best you can, because I do not think anybody here can characterize Senator Hollings’ position.

Mr. Zappa. I will carry on with the issue then.

Senator Exon. Mr. Chairman, I might help him out just a little bit. I might make a statement. This is one Senator that might be interested in legislation and/or regulation to some extent, recognizing the problems with the right of free expression.

If I expressed only expressed views that I do not believe I should be telling other people what they have to listen to. I really believe that the suggestion made by the original panel was some kind of an arrangement for voluntarily policing this in the music industry as the correct way to go.

If it will help you out in your testimony, I might join Senator Hollings or others in some kind of legislation and/or regulation, unless the free enterprise system, both the producers and you as the performers, see fit to clean up your act.

Mr. Zappa. OK, thank you.

The first thing I would like to do, because I know there is some foreign press involved here and they might not understand what the issue is about, one of the things the issue is about is the First Amendment to the Constitution, and it is short and I would like to read it so they will understand. It says:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

That is for reference.

These are my personal observations and opinions. I speak on behalf of no group or professional organization.

The PMRC proposal is an ill-conceived piece of nonsense which fails to deliver any real benefits to children, infringes the civil liberties of people who are not children, and promises to keep the courts busy for years dealing with the interpretational and enforcement problems my inherent in the proposal’s design.

It is my understanding that in law First Amendment issues are decided with a preference for the least restrictive alternative. In this context, the PMRC demands are the equivalent of treating dandruff by decapitation.
compared to sports expenditures. Your children have a right to know that something besides pop music exists.

It is unfortunate that the PMRC would rather dispense governmentally sanitized heavy metal music than something more uplifting. Is this an indication of PMRC's personal taste or just another manifestation of the low priority this administration has placed on education for the arts in America?

The answer, of course, is neither. You cannot distract people from thinking about an unfair tax by talking about music appreciation. For that you need sex, and lots of it.

The establishment of a rating system, voluntary or otherwise, opens the door to an endless parade of moral quality control programs based on things certain Christians do not like. What if the next bunch of Washington wives demands a large yellow "J" on all material written or performed by Jews, in order to save helpless children from exposure to concealed Zionist doctrine?

Record ratings are frequently compared to film ratings. Apart from the quantitative difference, there is another that is more important: People who act in films are hired to pretend. No matter how the film is rated, it will not hurt them personally.

Since many musicians write and perform their own material and stand by it as their art, whether you like it or not, an imposed rating will stigmatize them as individuals. How long before composers and performers are told to wear a festive little PMRC arm band with their scarlet letter on it?

Bad facts make bad law, and people who write bad laws are in my opinion more dangerous than songwriters who celebrate sexual freedom. Freedom of speech, freedom of religious thought, and the right to due process for composers, performers and retailers are imperiled if the PMRC and the major labels consensurate this nasty bargain.

Are we expected to give up article 1 so the big guys can collect an extra dollar on every blank tape and 10 to 25 percent on tape recorders? What is going on here? Do we get to vote on this tax?

I think that this whole matter has gotten completely blown out of proportion, and I agree with Senator Exon that there is a very dubious reason for having this event. I also agree with Senator Exon that you should not be wasting time on stuff like this, because from the beginning I have sensed that it is somebody's hobby project.

Now, I have done a number of interviews on television. People keep saying, can you not take a few steps in their direction, can you not sympathize, can you not empathize? I do more than that at this point. I have got an idea for a way to stop all this stuff and a way to give parents what they really want, which is information, accurate information as to what is inside the album, without providing a stigma for the musicians who have played on the album or the people who sing it or the people who wrote it. And I think that if you listen carefully to this idea that it might just get by all of these institutional problems and evil things.

As far as I am concerned, I have no objection to having all of the lyrics placed on the album routinely, all the time. But there is a little problem. Record companies do not own the right automatically—

ly to take these lyrics, because they are owned by a publishing company.

So, just as all the rest of the PMRC proposals would cost money, this would cost money too, because the record companies would need—they should not be forced to bear the cost, the extra expenditure to the publisher, to print those lyrics.

If you consider that the public needs to be warned about the contents of the records, what better way than to let them see exactly what the songs say? That way you do not have to put any kind of subjective rating on the record. You do not have to call it R, X, D/ A, anything. You can read it for yourself.

But in order for it to work properly, the lyrics should be on a uniform kind of a sheet. Maybe even the Government could print those sheets. Maybe it should even be paid for by the Government, the Government is interested in making sure that people have consumer information in this regard.

And you also have to realize that if a person buys the record and takes it out of the store, once it is out of the store you can't return it if you read the lyrics at home and decide that little Johnny is not supposed to have it.

I think that that should at least be considered, and the idea of imposing these ratings on live concerts, on the albums, asking record companies to reevaluate or drop or violate contracts that they already have with artists should be thrown out.

That is all I have to say.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Zappa. You understand that the previous witnesses were not asking for legislation. And I do not know, I cannot speak for Senator Hollings, but I think the prevailing view here is that nobody is asking for legislation.

The question is just focusing on what a lot of people perceive to be a problem, and you have indicated that you at least understand that there is another point of view. But there are people that think that parents should have some knowledge of what goes into their home.

Mr. ZAPPA. All along my objection has been with the tactics used by these people in order to achieve the goal. I just think the tactics have been really bad, and the whole premise of their proposal—they were badly advised in terms of record business law, they were badly advised in terms of practicality, or they would have known that certain things do not work mechanically with what they suggest.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Gore.

Senator Gore. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I found your statement very interesting and, although I disagree with some of the statements that you make and have made on other occasions, I have been a fan of your music, believe it or not. I respect you as a true original and a tremendously talented musician.

Your suggestion of printing the lyrics on the album is a very interesting one. The PMRC at one point said they would propose either a rating or warning, or printing all the lyrics on the album. The record companies came back and said they did not want to do that.
I think a lot of people agree with your suggestion that one easy way to solve this problem for parents would be to put the actual words there, so that parents could see them. In fact, the National Association of Broadcasters made exactly the same request of the record companies.

I think your suggestion is an intriguing one and might really be a solution for the problem.

Mr. ZAPPA. You have to understand that it does cost money, because you cannot expect publishers to automatically give up that right, which is a right for them. Somebody is going to have to reimburse the publishers, the record industry.

Without trying to mess up the album jacket art, it should be a sheet of paper that is slipped inside the shrink-wrap, so that when you take it out you can still have a complete album package. So there is going to be some extra cost for printing it. But as long as people realize that for this kind of consumer safety you are going to spend some money and as long as you can find a way to pay for it, I think that would be the best way to let people know.

Senator GORE. I do not disagree with that at all. And the separate sheet would also solve the problem with cassettes as well, because you do not have the space for words on the cassette pack.

Mr. ZAPPA. There would have to be a little accordion-fold.

Senator GORE. I have listened to you a number of times on this issue, and I guess the statement that I want to get from you is whether or not you feel this concern is legitimate.

You feel very strongly about your position, and I understand that. You are very articulate and forceful.

But occasionally you give the impression that you think parents are just silly to be concerned at all.

Mr. ZAPPA. No; that is not an accurate impression.

Senator GORE. Well, please clarify it, then.

Mr. ZAPPA. First of all, I think it is the parents’ concern; it is not the Government’s concern.

Senator GORE. The PMRC agrees with you on that.

Mr. ZAPPA. Well, that does not come across in the way they have been speaking. The whole drift that I have gotten, based upon the media blitz that has attended the PMRC and its rise to infamy, is that they have a special plan, and it has smelled like legislation up until now.

There are too many things that look like hidden agendas involved with this. And I am a parent. I have got four children. Two of them are here. I want them to grow up in a country where they can think what they want to think, be what they want to be, and not what somebody’s wife or somebody in Government makes them be.

I do not want to have that and I do not think you do either.

Senator GORE. OK. But now you are back on the issue of Government involvement. Let me say briefly on this point that the PMRC says repeatedly no legislation, no regulation, no Government action. It certainly sounded clear to me.

And as far as a hidden agenda, I do not see one, hear one, or know of one.

Mr. ZAPPA. OK, let me tell you why I have drawn these conclusions. First of all, they may say, we are not interested in legislation. But there are others who do, and because of their project bad things have happened in this country in the industry.

I believe there is actually some liability. Look at this. You have a situation where, even if you go for the lyric printed thing in the record, because of the tendency among Americans to be copycats— one guy commits a murder, you get a copycat murder—now you’ve got copycat censors.

You get a very bad situation in San Antonio, TX, right now where they are trying to pass PMRC-type individual ratings and attach them to live concerts, with the mayor down there trying to make a national reputation by putting San Antonio on the map as the first city in the United States to have these regulations, against the support of the city attorney, who says, I do not think this is constitutional.

But you know, there is this fervor to get in and do even more and even more.

And the other thing, the PMRC starts off talking about lyrics, but when they take it over into other realms they start talking about the videos. In fact, you misspoke yourself at the beginning in your introduction when you were talking about the music does this, the music does that. There is a distinct difference between those notes and chords and the baseline and the rhythm that support the words and the lyrics.

I do not know whether you really are talking about controlling the type of music.

The CHAIRMAN. The lyrics.

Mr. ZAPPA. So specifically we are talking about lyrics. It began with lyrics. But even looking at the PMRC fundraising letter, in the last paragraph at the bottom of the page it starts looking like it is branching into other areas, when it says: “We realize that this material has pervaded other aspects of society. And it is like what, you are going to fix it all for me?”

Senator GORE. No. I think the PMRC’s acknowledging some of the statements by some of their critics who say: Well, why single out the music industry.

Do I understand that you do believe that there is a legitimate concern here?

Mr. ZAPPA. But the legitimate concern is a matter of taste for the individual parent and how much sexual information that parent wants to give their child, at what age, at what time, in what quantity, OK. And I think that, because there is a tendency in the United States to hide sex, which I think is an unhealthy thing to do, and many parents do not give their children good sexual education, in spite of the fact that little books for kids are available, and other parents demand that sexual education be taken out of school, it makes the child vulnerable, because if you do not have something rational to compare it to when you see or hear about something that is aberrated you do not perceive it as an aberration.

Senator GORE. OK, I have run out of time.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Rockefeller.

Senator RockEFEFFER. No questions, Mr. Chairman.
The Chairman. Senator Gorton.

Senator Gorton. Mr. Zappa, I am astounded at the courtesy and soft-voiced nature of the comments of my friend, the Senator from Texas. I found your statements to be overbearing, incredibly and insensitively insulting to the people that were here previously; that you could manage to give the first amendment of the Constitution of the United States a bad name, if I felt that you had the slightest understanding of it, which I do not.

You do not have the slightest understanding of the difference between Government action and private action, and you have certainly destroyed any case you might otherwise have had with this Senator.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Zappa. Is this private action?

The Chairman. Senator Exon.

Senator Exon. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

Mr. Zappa, let me say that I was surprised that Senator Gore knew and liked your music. I must confess that I have never heard any of your music, to my knowledge.

Mr. Zappa. I would be more than happy to recite my lyrics to you.

Senator Exon. Can we forgo that?

Senator Gore. You have probably never heard of the Mothers of Invention.

Senator Exon. I have heard of Glen Miller and Mitch Miller. Did you ever perform with them?

Mr. Zappa. As a matter of fact, I took music lessons in grade school from Mitch Miller's brother.

Senator Exon. That is the first sign of hope we have had in this hearing.

Let us try and get down to a fundamental question here that I would like to ask you, Mr. Zappa. Do you believe that parents have the right and the obligation to mold the psychological development of their children?

Mr. Zappa. Yes, I think they have that right, and I also think they have that obligation.

Senator Exon. Do you see any extreme difficulty in carrying out those obligations for a parent by material falling into the hands of their children over which they have little or no control?

Mr. Zappa. Well, one of the things that has been brought up before is talking about very young children getting access to the material that they have been showing here today. And what I have said to that in the past is a teenager may go into a record store unescorted with $8.98 in his pocket, but very young children do not.

If they go into a record store, the $8.98 is in mom or dad's pocket, and they can always say, Johnny, buy a book. They can say, Johnny, buy instrumental music; there is some nice classical music for you here; why do you not listen to that.

The parent can ask or guide the child in another direction, away from Sheena Easton, Prince, or whoever else you have been complaining about. There is always that possibility.

Senator Exon. As I understand it from your testimony—and once again, I want to emphasize that I see nothing wrong whatsoever; in fact, I salute the ladies for bringing this to the attention of the public as best they see fit. I think you could tell from my testimony that I tend to agree with them.

You cannot say that we do not overstep our bounds and try and—and I emphasize once again—tell somebody else what they should see. I am primarily worried about children.

It seems to me from your statement that you have no obligation—or no objection whatsoever to printing lyrics, if that would be legally possible, or from a standpoint of having the room to do that, on records or tapes. Is that not what you said?

Mr. Zappa. I think it would be advisable for two reasons. One, it gives people one of the things that they have been asking for. It gives them that type of consumer protection because, if you can read the English language and you can see the lyrics on the back, you have no excuse for complaining if you take the record out of the store.

And also, I think that the record industry has been damaged and it has been given a very bad rap by this whole situation because it has been indicated, or people have attempted to indicate, that there is so much of this kind of material that people object to in the industry, that that is what the industry is.

It is not bad at all. Some of the albums that have been selected for abuse here are obscure. Some of them are already several years old. And I think that a lot of deep digging was done in order to come up with the song about anal vapors or whatever it was that they were talking about before.

Senator Exon. If I understand you, you would be in support of printing the lyrics, but you are adamantly opposed to any kind of a rating system?

Mr. Zappa. I am opposed to the rating system because, as I said, if you put a rating on the record it goes directly to the character of the person who made the record, whereas if you rate a film, a guy who is in the film has been hired as an actor. He is pretending. You rate the film, whatever it is, it does not hurt him.

But whether you like what is on the record or not, the guy who made it, that is his art and to stigmatize him is unfair.

Senator Exon. Well, likewise, if you are primarily concerned about the artists, is it not true that for many many years, we have had ratings of movies with indications as to the sexual content of movies and that has been, as near as I can tell, a voluntary action on the part of the actors in the movies and the producers of the movies and the distributors?

That seems to have worked reasonably well. What is wrong with that?

Mr. Zappa. Well, first of all, it replaced something that was far more restrictive, which was the Hayes Office. And as far as that being voluntary, there are people who wish they did not have to rate their films. They still object to rating their films, but the reason the ratings go on is because if they are not rated they will not get distributed or shown in theaters. So there is a little bit of pressure involved, but still there is no stigma.

Senator Exon. The Government does not require that. The point I am trying to make is—and while I think these hearings should
not have been held if we are not considering legislation or regulations at this time, I emphasize earlier that they might follow.

I simply want to say to you that I suspect that, unless the industry "cleans up their act"—and I use that in quotes again—there is likely to be legislation. And it seems to me that it would not be too far removed from reality or too offensive to anyone if you could follow the general guidelines, right, wrong, or indifferent, that are now in place with regard to the movie industry.

Mr. ZAPPA. Well, I would object to that. I think, first of all, I believe it was you who asked the question of Mrs. Gore whether there was any other indication on the album as to the contents. And I would say that a buzzsaw blade between a guy's legs on the album cover is a good indication that it is not for little Johnny.

Senator Exon. I do not believe I asked her that question, but the point you made is a good one, because if that should not go to little minds I think there should be at least some minimal activity or attempt on the part of the producers and distributors, and indeed possibly the performers, to see that that does not get to that little mind.

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

Senator Hollings. Mr. Zappa, I apologize for coming back in late, but I am just hearing the latter part of it. I hear that you say that perhaps we could print the words, and I think that is a good idea, and that it would go a long way toward satisfying everyone's objections. Mr. ZAPPA. All we have to do is find out how it is going to be paid for.

Senator Hollings. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZAPPA. Well, I do not know whether it is accurate, because sometimes they have trouble deciding how a film gets to be an X or an R or whatever. And you have two problems. One is the quantity year, see what they were buying and I think that is a step in the right direction.

Mr. ZAPPA. Thank you.

Senator Hawkins. Mr. Zappa, you say you have four children?

Mr. ZAPPA. Yes, four children.

Senator Hawkins. Have you ever purchased toys for those children?

Mr. ZAPPA. No; my wife does.

Senator Hawkins. Well, I might tell you that if you were to go into a toy store—which is very educational for fathers, by the way; it is not a maternal responsibility to buy toys for children—that you may look on the box and the box says, this is suitable for 5 to 7 years of age, or 8 to 15, or 15 and above, to give you some guidance for a toy for a child.

Do you object to that?

Mr. ZAPPA. In a way I do, because that means that somebody in an office somewhere is making a decision about how smart my child is.

Senator Hawkins. I would be interested to see what toys your kids ever had.

Mr. ZAPPA. Why would you be interested?

Senator Hawkins. Just as a point of interest.

Mr. ZAPPA. Well, come on over to the house. I will show them to you.

Senator Hawkins. Mr. Zappa, you say you have four children?

Mr. ZAPPA. Yes.

Senator Hawkins. Do you make a profit from sales of rock records?

Mr. ZAPPA. Yes.

Senator Hawkins. So you do make a profit from the sales of rock records?

Mr. ZAPPA. Yes.

Senator Hawkins. Thank you. I think that statement tells the story to this committee. Thank you.

Mr. ZAPPA. Thank you.

Statement of Frank Zappa

These are my personal observations and opinions. They are addressed to the PMRC as well as this committee. I speak on behalf of no group or professional organization. The PMRC proposal is an ill-conceived piece of nonsense which fails to deliver any real benefits to children, infringes the civil liberties of people who are not children, and promises to keep the courts busy for years dealing with the interpretational and enforcement problems inherent in the proposal's design.
The next witness is John Denver.

John, thank you very much for being with us.

STATEMENT OF JOHN DENVER

Mr. Denver. Good morning, Mr. Chairman. It is a great pleasure to be with you, and I apologize for running in and out. I seem to be testifying and briefing many people here on Capitol Hill today, and it causes the ingoing and outgoing.

Honorable Chairman, members of the committee, ladies and gentlemen: It is a great honor and a privilege to appear before you this morning and to take advantage of the opportunity given me in our free society to speak my mind, to give voice to my opinions in a public forum in front of not only the leadership of our great country, but the press, the media, and through them all who might be listening around our country and around the world.

I am here to address the issue of a possible rating system in the recording industry, labeling records where excesses of explicit sex and graphic violence have occurred and, furthermore, references to drugs and alcohol or the occult are included in the lyrics.

These hearings have been called to determine whether or not the Government should intervene to enforce this practice. Mr. Chairman, this would approach censorship. May I be very clear that I am strongly opposed to censorship of any kind in our society or anywhere else in the world.

I have had in my experience two encounters with this sort of censorship. My song "Rocky Mountain High" was banned from many radio stations as a drug-related song. This was obviously done without dovishly deciding and had never seen or heard the tune and also had never experienced the elation, celebration of life, or the joy in living that one feels when he observes something as wondrous as the Perseides meteor shower on a moonless, cloudless night, when there are so many stars that you have a shadow from the starlight, and you are out camping with your friends, your best friends, and introducing them to one of nature's most spectacular light shows for the very first time.

I had another encounter with the PMRC's request for labels rating explicit material, untouched. What assurance do I have that any national panel to review my music would make any better judgment?

To my knowledge, my movie "Oh God" was not banned in any theaters. However, some newspapers refused to print our advertisements, and some theaters refused to put the name of the film on the marquee.

I do not believe that we were using the name of our Lord in vain. Quite the opposite, we were making a small effort to spread his message that we are here for each other and not against each other.

Discipline and self-restraint when practiced by an individual, a family, or a company is an effective way to deal with this issue. The same thing when forced on a people by their government or, worse, by a self-appointed watchdog of public morals, is suppression and will not be tolerated in a democratic society.

Mr. Chairman, the suppression of the people of a society begins in my mind with the censorship of the written or spoken word. It was so in Nazi Germany. It is so in many places today where those in power are afraid of the consequences of an informed and educated people.

In a mature, incredibly diverse society such as ours, the access to all perspectives of an issue becomes more and more important. Those things which in our experience are undesirable generally prove to be unfurtheering and sooner or later become boring. That process cannot and should not be stifled.

On the other hand, that which is denied becomes that which is most interesting. That which is hidden—excuse me. That which is denied becomes that which is most desired, and that which is hidden becomes that which is most interesting. Consequently, a
great deal of time and energy is spent trying to get at what is being kept from you. Our children, our people, our society and the world cannot afford this waste.

It was my pleasure to meet with radio programmers and broadcasters from all over the country this past week in Dallas. They expressed their concern about this issue and the direction in which it seemed to be going. They also expressed their willingness to practice the discipline and self-restraint that I mentioned earlier, especially when they were given direction by their listeners. I believe this to be true, because they are in business to please their listening audience.

I would like to acknowledge the PMRC for bringing this issue to the attention of not only our industry, but our Government and our people. It is obvious that we are dealing with a real problem which warrants our concern. I would like to point out, however, that we address ourselves not to the problem, but to the symptoms, I suggest that explicit lyrics and graphic videos are not so far removed from what is seen on television every day and night, whether it be in the soap operas or on the news, and that we should point our finger at the recording industry while watching the general public at a nationally televised baseball game chant in unison "The Blue Jays suck" is ludicrous.

The problem, Mr. Chairman, in my opinion has to do with our willingness as parents to take responsibility for the upbringing of our children. We pay attention to their interests, to respond to their needs, and to recognize that we as parents and as individuals have a greater influence on our children and on each other than anything else could possibly have.

To quote a wise old man from ancient China: "If there be righteousness— not self-righteousness; that is not part of the quote. "If there be righteousness in the heart, there will be beauty in the character. If there be beauty in the character, there will be harmony in the home. If there be harmony in the home, there will be order in the Nation. And if there be order in the Nation, there will be peace in the world."

I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, if I may add a couple of personal words. I am a father of two children, both adopted, and I have a lot of friends in the music business, other rock performers who have children also, and all of them, including myself, we have a great concern for our children. That is why I am here today.

In my experience, sir, all over the world one of the most interesting things about the music that young people are listening to is that it gives us as adults a very clear insight as to what is going on in their minds. We can know what they are thinking by listening to the music that they surround themselves with.

The people that I have had the opportunity to talk with, the troubled children, the teenagers who are considering suicide, what they expressed to me is a real frustration in their lives, an inability to communicate with their parents, an inability to understand or to envision any kind of a possible future because of the nuclear threat that we live under.

They do not see things getting better economically. They do not see things getting better for the small businessman, for the small farmer. They do not see a future for themselves.

It is my opinion that it is out of this that some young people put a gun into their mouths and pull the trigger. We can turn this around, sir. We can address the reality of a problem and not deal with just the symptoms, and create not only a better world for our children but for ourselves and all of humanity.

We can end hunger. We can rid the world of nuclear weapons. We can learn to live together as human beings on a planet that travels through the universe, living the example of peace and harmony among all people.

The CHAIRMAN. John, thank you very much for your excellent statement.

You talked about the importance of, in your words, an informed and educated people, and about the importance of communication between parents and their children. And as I understand it, that is exactly the point that was made by the Parents Music Resource Center group that was here earlier. That is, they are not asking for censorship, they are not asking for Government action.

Nobody has proposed that to my knowledge. There is no legislation that is pending that in any way suggests any censorship. The point is not less information. Nobody is trying to prevent rock stars from singing whatever they want or music companies from publishing whatever they want. The question is one of communication and openness.

Senator Exon said earlier, if we are not legislating why have a hearing? Frequently we have oversight hearings in the Congress, and one of the reasons for it is to just air what is going on, to bring it out in the open, to increase information, not to reduce information.

What the mothers are saying is that they do not have sufficient information. They want to know more, they want to know. Whatever they want, the question is one of communication and openness.

They do not want what goes on in their homes simply to be a matter between the music artist, the rock star, and their 11- or 12-year-old, 18-year-old child. They want to be in on the act, too, and all they want is more information as to what is going on.

And that would seem to me that that is a reasonable request for them to make, that it is reasonable for all of us to be in on the act, rather than just to have almost a private relationship between our kids and somebody outside the home.

Mr. DENVER. I understand, Senator, and I applaud what is taking place here today. My concern is that it sort of feels like, if we are bringing this issue to the Congress through the Senate, there is a very real possibility that legislation is going to be acted upon. I understand that.

The CHAIRMAN. Zero.

Mr. DENVER. But several gentlemen have said that if it looks like it is possible to make legislation, some of you today have said, if it is possible to make legislation that you would go further with this if there is a constitutional way to do that.

The CHAIRMAN. Just believe me, zero chance of legislation. I do not think anybody has introduced a bill, and I do not really think that is a possibility at all.
Mr. DENVER. You are different—I mean, you and I are the same. We do not watch much TV. I do not watch that much television, obviously.

But the record is otherwise. They are watching television as much as the instructions in the classrooms of the public schools and the churches. All surveys show that, so it is being watched. That is the fact, and living in the real world, where you and I would like to restrict our children and my grandchildren now, it is a real problem. It is a real problem.

And I guess you know from being a master at the art that, where you start off selling that record is to get it accepted at some good music store. And over here, for me one of the things that I am fortunate with is my children and I live in beautiful country and we have a lot of activities which really call us outdoors, call us together and away from the boob tube. I do not watch very much television.

And I think we can exercise this kind of influence on our children even in a city environment.

Senator HOLLINGS. You and I are different—I mean, you and I are the same. We do not watch much TV. I do not watch that much television, obviously.

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And I guess you know from being a master at the art that, where you start off selling that record is to get it accepted at some good programming, some good broadcasting, and then the sales follow. You cannot print those words ahead of time so I will know to cut the television off quick.

The only question is there a possibility of, first, bringing the issue before the country.

Mr. DENVER. And you have done that and I applaud that.

The CHAIRMAN. Just talk about it and ventilate our concerns.

And secondly, is there a possibility of increasing the information that is available to parents of kids, who have the real responsibility for raising those children and for establishing whatever values those children are going to have?

Mr. DENVER. I understand.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Hollings.

Senator HOLLINGS. Welcome. I am glad to see you working, in addition to the hunger field, the hunger of the body, and the hunger of the mind, John. I am delighted to work with you on this.

There are some differences. For one thing, as an old trial lawyer, we know well that Clarence Darrow made a 9-hour summation in the Scopes trial. A trial lawyer today is competing with television and television performers. If he makes more than a 9-minute summation, he has lost the jury, his case, and everything else. The parent is in competition with that 6 hours of rock coming over radio and TV.

Now, it is pleasant to talk about parents and their duties and responsibilities, but they are in one heck of a competition out there. We do know that perhaps with television in many, many instances, parents are trying to do their best—in the Hinckley case and what he has lost the jury, his case, and everything else. The parent is in competition with that 6 hours of rock coming over radio and TV.

We know, talking about free speech, that the broadcast airwaves belong to the people. We will take a radio station in my own backyard using four-letter words. The FCC fined them. That was not unconstitutional. We do have some authorities, we do have some information, he has lost the jury, his case, and everything else. The parent is in competition with that 6 hours of rock coming over radio and TV.

And I think this is kind of an influence that we can exercise as parents on our children. Just because it is on 7 hours does not mean our kids are going to sit there and watch it that whole time, and we can give them a certain amount of time.

And over here, for me one of the things that I am fortunate with is my children and I live in beautiful country and we have a lot of activities which really call us outdoors, call us together and away from the boob tube. I do not watch very much television.

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And I guess you know from being a master at the art that, where you start off selling that record is to get it accepted at some good programming, some good broadcasting, and then the sales follow. You cannot print those words ahead of time so I will know to cut the television off quick.

Whatever it is, unless that discipline develops, in other words, with the broadcast media, we are going to be forced somewhere with regulations, through the FCC or otherwise. I do not think the American public is going to go along just with a nice hearing up in
Washington. I think there is going to be something more developed and some kind of discipline, as you indicate.

I am trying to find out from you, how you develop that discipline a little bit better than what has been developed?

Mr. Denver. Well, I think that a good beginning to addressing this real problem is this hearing that is taking place. What most concerns me, aside from potential legislation which might be enacted, which we have heard today is not going to be the case, is that the whole presentation made by the PMRC comes from in my experience a foundation of fear.

The only thing we have to fear, as President Roosevelt said, is fear itself. I am not afraid of anything. I am not afraid of what my children might see. I am not afraid of anything that might be shown them or done in their presence that would lessen my influence on them or their opportunity to grow, to be fine upstanding adults, and perhaps some day serve in this very august body.

Senator Hollings. Well, most respectfully, President Roosevelt, never heard these records.

The Chairman. Senator Gore.

Mr. Denver. I think the things that he heard were far worse, sir.

The Chairman. Senator Gore.

Senator Gore. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

It is an honor to be able to ask some questions. I have been a fan of music for a long time, Mr. Denver, not only of your music but also of your contributions to efforts such as Farm Aid at the present time, world peace, and your trips to the Soviet Union and elsewhere.

Do you see the trend of increased sexual explicitness and violence in rock music that is outlined by this presentation? Have you ever been to a Motley Crue concert, for example?

Mr. Denver. No, sir.

Senator Gore. Do you agree that there does seem to be a growing trend, at least in the heavy metal area, that emphasizes explicit violence and sex and sado-masochism and the rest? You are aware of that music, are you not?

Mr. Denver. Yes.

Senator Gore. Why do you think that has been growing in popularity?

Mr. Denver. Again, sir, my experience, not only in this country but all over the world, is that music today is the medium which most specifically tells us what is going on in young people's minds, not what is being put into them but what reflects what they are interested in.

I think that this addresses itself to a much graver problem in fact, the source of the symptom that we are discussing here today.

Senator Gore. Well, if a 10-year-old listens to a song glorifying rape, is it not reflecting what is in that 10-year-old's mind, is it?

Mr. Denver. I do not think so. I do not think there are many 10-year-olds who know what rape is.

Senator Gore. I am not sure I would agree with that.

If you have an explicit description of a suicide, in a song that seems to glorify and promote suicide, young people are aware of that.

Mr. Denver. Senator Gore, excuse me for interrupting. If I could count the number of times that a mother or father has come up to me or a child has come up to me and said, if I do not get your autograph my mother is going to kill me, if I do not get your autograph my daughter is going to kill me—you know, just this is part of our language. And there might be a slight difference, but I do not think it is as big as you point out.

In a way, this video that we watched here today I think is probably a fantasy that every kid has about his father at some point in time. It may not be exactly those particular graphics. It may be out on the farm and being able to take your dad out and put a board to his fanny. But this goes on. This is a part of growing up.

And our society has gotten increasingly complex. There are many more images to reach from. They all have an impact on the child's mind.

And I am saying that the small percentage of records that we are discussing here today compared to the 125,000 songs that are released every year is minuscule and it is not going to affect our children to a degree that we need to be fearful of.

We need to be conscious of it. We need to concern ourselves and we need to communicate with our children and have them feel comfortable with communicating with us.

Senator Gore. Let me come back to the question about suicide. Let us say you have a popular rock star who has a lot of fans, who sings a song that says suicide is the solution, and appears in fan magazines with a gun barrel pointed in his mouth and promotes material that seems to glorify suicide.

The United States has one of the highest rates of teen suicide of any country in the world. The rate has gone up 300 percent in the last decade among young people, while it has remained constant among adults.

Do you think it is a responsible act for a record company to put out a song glorifying suicide and for the artist to promote the album by putting a gun in his mouth in a simulation of suicide?

Mr. Denver. I would not like to be the one to tell a record company or an artist what to do. I certainly think the picture you have described is deplorable, and I do not like to be the one to tell a record company or an artist what to do. I certainly think the picture you have described is deplorable, and if I found that in my home I would talk to my kids about it and get rid of it.

The Chairman. Could I interrupt? It is my understanding that you have to leave. Is that correct?

Mr. Denver. Senator, I appreciate that. Yes, I have an appointment with NASA at noon and if it is possible I would like to go to that. But I also really appreciate being able to discuss this with you all and I am happy to stay.

The Chairman. Let me ask, are there any more questions?

Senator Gore. Mr. Chairman, I will stop my questions at this time and wish Mr. Denver good luck in getting on the Space Shuttle.

Mr. Denver. Thanks very much. I appreciate that.

The Chairman. Senator Exxon has a question and I think Senator Pressler has.

Senator Exxon. Mr. Denver, thank you very much for being here. I appreciated your testimony. I do not know you, but, although it may lead to the beginning of the end of your career, I like your music.
Senator Exon. In fact, I think I know you. I think a friend of yours, Rainbow Terrain, has talked about you. She is an art instructor and a friend of my wife's, and I kind of think I know you through her.

Just one basic question. Please clarify for us, what is your opinion to the key question that has been asked time and time again, here, and you have alluded to it: Are you for the printing of material on records? Are you for or against, or are you for or against any kind of a rating as long as it is done voluntarily between the record companies and the producers?

That is my key question. And I would simply say one more time, which I have said every time I have had this microphone this morning, I think it is wrong to imply that, although no bills have been introduced, that bills might not be introduced. And I want to hold that threat, for what it is worth, over the head of trying to accomplish some free enterprise volunteerism that most people have agreed to.

What do you think about a free enterprise volunteerism, getting together and either printing or coming up with a rating program of some kind that would be properly displayed in the records?

Mr. Denver. I am opposed. As an artist, I am opposed to any kind of a rating system, voluntarily or otherwise. I think putting lyrics on the sleeve of an album or a jacket of an album is no problem for me.

Again, I think it goes beyond reading the words, and I bring up the song "Rocky Mountain High." You know, some people, high is getting stoned and high is a feeling of elation, celebration of life.

As I told the people in the Soviet Union when I had the privilege of singing for them there, I sang "Rocky Mountain High" and then I described what "high" meant to me. And I said to them, that is how I feel having the privilege of singing for you.

That is how I feel having the opportunity to participate in my Government here today.

Senator Exon. Thank you, Mr. Denver.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Pressler.

Senator Pressler. I guess that ties in with my question. Your basic line is that you are against any type of Government action in this area, or indeed any voluntary labeling?

Mr. Denver. I would be, yes.

Senator Pressler. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. John, thank you very much. Thank you for your patience, for waiting so long.

Mr. Denver. Thank you, Senator. It is a great privilege to be with you all.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Next we have Mr. Dee Snider of Twisted Sister, Freefall Talent Group.

Mr. Snider, thank you for being here.

STATEMENT OF DEE SNIDER, OF TWISTED SISTER

Mr. Snider. Thank you for having me here.

I do not know if it is morning or afternoon. I will say both. Good morning and good afternoon.

My name is Dee Snider. That is S-n-i-d-e-r. I have been asked to come here to present my views on the subject of the content of certain sound recordings and suggestions that recording packages be labeled to provide a warning to prospective purchasers of sexually explicit or other potentially offensive content.

Before I get into that, I would like to tell the committee a little bit about myself. I am 30 years old, I am married, I have a 3-year-old son. I was born and raised a Christian and I still adhere to those principles. Believe it or not, I do not smoke, I do not drink, and I do not do drugs.

I do play in and write the songs for a rock and roll band named Twisted Sister that is classified as heavy metal, and I pride myself on writing songs that are consistent with my above-mentioned beliefs.

There are many facets to this complex issue and time does not permit me to address all of them. However, my feelings are expressed for the most part by the August 5, 1985, letter to the Parents Music Resource Center from Mr. Stanley Gortikov, president of the Recording Industry Association of America.

This letter was a formal response to the PMRC petition of the RIAA. The only part of this document I do not support is Mr. Gortikov's unnecessary and unfortunate decision to agree to a so-called generic label on some selected records. In my opinion this should be retracted.

Since I seem to be the only person addressing this committee today who has been a direct target of accusations from the presumably responsible PMRC, I would like to use this occasion to speak on a more personal note and show just how unfair the whole concept of lyrical interpretation and judgment can be and how many times this can amount to little more than character assassination.

I have taken the liberty of distributing to you material and lyrics pertaining to these accusations. There were three attacks in particular which I would like to address.

Accusation No. 1. This attack was contained in an article written by Tipper Gore, which was given the forum of a full page in my hometown newspaper on Long Island. In this article Ms. Gore claimed that one of my songs, "Under the Blade," had lyrics encouraging sadomasochism, bondage, and rape.

The lyrics she quoted have absolutely nothing to do with these topics. On the contrary, the words in question are about surgery and the fear that it instills in people. Furthermore, the reader of this article is led to believe that the three lines she quotes go together in the song when, as you can see from reading the lyrics, the first two lines she cites are an edited phrase from the second verse and the third line is a misquote of a line from the chorus.

That the writer could misquote me is curious, since we make it a point to print all our lyrics on the inner sleeve of every album. As the creator of "Under the Blade," I can say categorically that the...
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only sadomasochism, bondage, and rape in this song is in the mind of Ms. Gore. 

Accusation No. 2. The PMRC has made public a list of 15 of what they feel are some of the most blatant songs lyrically. On this list is our song “We’re Not Gonna Take It,” upon which has been bestowed a “V” rating, indicating violent lyrical content. You will note from the lyrics before you that there is absolutely no violence of any type either sung about or implied anywhere in the song. Now, it strikes me that the PMRC may have confused our video presentation for this song with the song with the lyrics, with the meaning of the lyrics. 

It is no secret that the videos often depict story lines completely unrelated to the lyrics of the song they accompany. The video “We’re Not Gonna Take It” was simply meant to be a cartoon with human actors playing variations on the Roadrunner/Wile E. Coyote theme. Each stunt was selected from my extensive personal collection of cartoons. You will note when you watch the entire video that after each catastrophe our villain suffers through, in the next sequence he reappears unharmed by any previous attack, no worse for the wear. 

By the way, I am very pleased to note that the United Way of America has been granted a request to use portions of our “We’re Not Gonna Take It” video in a program they are producing on the subject of the changing American family. They asked for it because of its “light-hearted way of talking about communicating with teenagers.”

It is gratifying that an organization as respected as the United Way of America appreciates where we are coming from. I have included a copy of the United Way’s request as part of my written testimony. Thank you, United Way.

Accusation No. 3. Last Tuesday a public forum regarding the lyric controversy was held in New York. Among the panelists was Ms. Gore. Trying to stem the virtual tidal wave of antiratings sentiment coming from the audience, Ms. Gore made the following statement:

I agree this is a small percentage of all music, thank goodness. But it is becoming more mainstream. And a lot of the kids wear the Sister and a woman in handcuffs sort of spread-eagled. This is an outright lie. Not only have we never sold a shirt of this type; we have always taken great pains to steer clear of sexism in our merchandise, records, stage show, and personal lives. Furthermore, we have always promoted the belief that rock and roll should not be sexist, but should cater to males and females equally.

I defy Ms. Gore to produce such a shirt to back up her claim. I am tired of running into kids on the street who tell me that they cannot play our records any more because of the misinformation their parents are being fed by the PMRC on TV and in the newspapers. These are the only three accusations I have come across. All three are totally unfounded. Who knows what other false and irresponsible things may have been said about me or my band.

There happens to be one area where I am in complete agreement with the PMRC, as well as the National PTA and probably most of the parents on this committee. That is, it is my job as a parent to monitor what my children see, hear, and read during their preteen years. The full responsibility for this falls on the shoulders of my wife and I, because there is no one else capable of making these judgments for us.

Parents can thank the PMRC for reminding them that there is no substitute for parental guidance. But that is where the PMRC’s job ends.

The beauty of literature, poetry, and music is that they leave room for the audience to put its own imagination, experiences, and dreams into the words. The examples I cited earlier showed clear evidence of Twisted Sister’s music being completely misinterpreted and being taken as something it was never meant to be. 

We cannot allow this to continue. There is no authority who has the right or the necessary insight to make these judgments, not myself, not the Federal Government, not some recording industry committee, not the PTA, not the RIAA, and certainly not the PMRC.

I would like to thank the committee for this time, and I hope my testimony will aid you in cleaning up this issue.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Snider. Mr. Snider, let us suppose that there is music which, say, glorifies incest; not yours, but suppose that there is some music that glorifies incest. Do you think parents should know about it, or do you think that it is just a matter between whoever is selling the record and whoever is buying it?

Mr. SNIDER. As I said in my testimony, I think it is very important that parents be aware of the lyrics of these songs.

The CHAIRMAN. How could they find out about it?

Mr. SNIDER. Well, quite simply, as a parent myself and as a rock fan, I know that when I see an album cover with a severed goat’s head in the middle of a pentagram between a woman’s legs, that is not the kind of album I want my son to be listening to.

If I read a title on the back of, say, Somebody’s Ice Cream Castle, a title called “If the Kid Can’t Make You Come,” whatever it is, I realize that is a sexually explicit song. By just looking at the cover, looking at the lyrics, looking at the titles, that should cover just about all bases. The few albums that do not express their intentions on the cover, or in the song titles, I think a parent could take it home, listen to it. And I do not think there are too many retail stores that would deny them the ability to return the album for something different.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you think that most parents, or even kids for that matter, know everything that is on an album when they buy it, when the child buys the album?

Mr. SNIDER. I do not know half the things that are on half the albums I own. Some of the bands I listen to, I listen for musical reasons. Other bands I listen to for lyrical reasons. As I said in my testimony, I think it is very important that parents be aware that these lyrics exist. The full responsibility for this falls on the shoulders of my wife and I, because there is no one else capable of making these judgments for us. 

I know that AC/DC, one of my favorite bands, sings a lot of songs glorifying hell and damnation. I am a Christian. I do not believe—I do not want to go to hell and I do not want to be damned for all
time. But I do like the feel of the songs. The lyrics have no effect on me.

Other bands who have more to say, I listen to their words and I learn from their words.

The Chairman. Do you think that now there is adequate basis for parents to know what is on the records that their kids are buying?

Mr. Snider. I think if they really are concerned, there is. But quite honestly, I do not think that the majority of parents are in reality as concerned as the PMRC or myself. I do not think they really want to spend the time to listen to what they might consider to be a bunch of noise. They put it on and they cannot understand a thing that is being said anyway.

And so I think most of them do not spend enough time with it.

The Chairman. Senator Hollings.

Senator Hollings. Yes. Mr. Snider, I think I would just take the opportunity to make an observation. You and I would differ as to what is obscene or what is shocking or what is vulgar, and persons of goodwill will differ on that particular score.

I think that somewhere in this hearing record, we should not be on the defensive and we should not create the atmosphere that we are powerless. The absolute nature of your statement that we do not have any authority—I only want to refer everyone to the Pacifica Foundation case, where the Federal Communications Commission was questioned as to its power to regulate public radio and TV broadcasts that was indecent but not obscene.

You see, they differed between what was indecent, what was obscene, and what was shocking. They had the seven dirty words. I think everyone remembers that case on the west coast, and the Supreme Court of the United States found that the FCC positively had the authority, and the responsibility.

I am quoting from the language of the Supreme Court:

Patently offensive, indecent material presented over the airwaves confronts the citizen not only in public, but also in the privacy of the home. The individual’s right to be left alone, plainly outweighs the first amendment rights of an intruder.

This is not just a forum to rally one way or the other and hope something happens. This is a forum with a definite responsibility with respect to Congress in enunciating the duties of the Federal Communications Commission, which have been constitutionally followed.

I understand your opinion. That is why we invited you up here, to hear your words and not mine. I think that the general nature of all of this testimony of noting censorship, and first amendment absolutism, does not pertain with respect to the broadcast media. That is, of course, the main media that I guess you would agree to actually sell the records, would it not be?

Mr. Snider. Yes. Except I would like to clarify something. I said no authority has the right or necessary insight. I did not say you were not able to. I said you do not have the right or I do not have the right or the RIAA.

Also, we are talking about the airwaves as opposed to a person going with their money to purchase an album to play in their home, on their own time. The airwaves are something different.

I think that the FCC and even MTV have done a fair job in keeping profanity and obscenity and things like that off the public airwaves. But as far as what you listen to in your own home, that is something totally different, I feel in my opinion.

Senator Hollings. I think that the record ought to be elaborated to show just that.

Previously, about 5 or 6 years ago, we had the TV networks before this committee, and pursuant to that particular hearing the FCC went back. I remember CBS specifically. They demonstrated how they had this film, and then got together with the producer and removed certain scenes of violence and certain four-letter words, and did not offend the producer’s sense of art in the production itself.

We have made some progress. The bottom line with respect to these particular records, the Supreme Court has found, is that there is that right and that responsibility.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman. Senator Gore.

Senator Gore. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Snider. Excuse me. Are you going to tell me you are a big fan of my music as well?

Senator Gore. No, I am not a fan of your music. I am aware that Frank Zappa and John Denver cover quite a spectrum, and I do enjoy them both. I am not, however, a fan of Twisted Sister and I will readily say that.

Mr. Snider. What is the name of your fan club?

Mr. Snider. The fan club is called the SMF Fans of Twisted Sister.

Senator Gore. And what does “SMF” stand for when it is spelled out?

Mr. Snider. It stands for the Sick Mother Fucking Fans of Twisted Sister.

Senator Gore. Is this also a Christian group?

Mr. Snider. I do not believe profanity has anything to do with Christianity, thank you.

Senator Gore. It is just an interesting choice. I was getting the impression from your presentation that you were a very wholesome kind of performer, and that is an interesting title for your fan club.

You say your song “Under the Blade” is about surgery. Have you ever had surgery with your hands tied and your legs strapped?

Mr. Snider. The song was written about my guitar player, Eddie Ojeda. He was having polyps removed from his throat and he was very fearful of this operation. And I said: Eddie, while you are in the hospital I am going to write a song for you.

I said it was about the fear of operations. I think people imagine being helpless on a table, the bright light in their face, the blade coming down on them, and being totally afraid that they may wake up, who knows, dead, handicapped. There is a certain fear of hospitals. That is what, in my imagination, what I see the hospitals like.

Senator Gore. Is there a reference to the hospital in the song?

Mr. Snider. No, there is not. But there is not a reference to a woman, sadomasochism, or—well, bondage, yes.
Senator Gore. There is just a reference to someone whose hands are tied down and whose legs are strapped down, and he is going under the blade to be cut.

Mr. Snyder. Yes, there is.

Senator Gore. So it is not really a wild leap of the imagination to jump to the conclusion that the song is about something other than surgery or hospitals, neither of which are mentioned in the song?

Mr. Snyder. No, it is not a wild jump. And I think what I said at one part was that songs allow a person to put their own imagination, experiences, and dreams into the lyrics. People can interpret it in many ways.

Ms. Gore was looking for sadomasochism and bondage and she found it. Someone looking for surgical references would have found that as well.

Senator Gore. Why do you think there is so much sadomasochism and bondage in some of these new songs?

Mr. Snyder. I cannot speak for the other artists. I am really only here to defend myself, and hopefully by speaking for myself as one person, songwriter in a band that I feel has been unjustly dumped on, that will just warn us of the dangers of what we are trying to do here. I really cannot speak for the other bands.

Senator Gore. Now, you made reference to a comment about T-shirts. I would simply note for the record that the word “T-shirts” was in plural, and one of them referred to Twisted Sister and the other referred to a woman in handcuffs. And it was not intended, as I understand it, to say that you appear with a woman in handcuffs.

There are a lot of different T-shirts and advertisements around today. I have noticed from some of the fan magazines particularly featuring heavy metal music that little sadomasochistic outfits are advertised, with the fingerless gloves and spikes and studs on them, and that these little S&M outfits are marketed to teens and preteens. Is that correct?

Mr. Snyder. Well, they are marketed. Who buys them I am not sure.

I would just like to say, in reference to the comment about T-shirts, I have with me a taped cassette of the exact—

Senator Gore. No, I am reading from your transcript of it in your statement.

Mr. Snyder. I will have to check the transcript, but when it was said there was no question she was referring to a Twisted Sister T-shirt. There was no question if I played the tape for anybody.

Senator Gore. Well, in your own transcript it is in plural, “T-shirts,” and two examples are cited. But I do not want to belabor that point.

Now, you said that you can look at the titles of albums and look at the covers and tell what kind of material is inside. Does the title “Purple Rain” give you an indication that the material is about masturbation?

Mr. Snyder. You mean the album title “Purple Rain”? No, it does not. I did not say in all cases I believe I covered that there are occasional albums that are a bit misleading. I said I do not
have a lot of positive things to tell people about. And I said everything on my records I will stand behind and say, "Yes, I wrote those words and this is what it meant and this is what I was trying to say—Yes."

Senator ROCKEFELLER. Do you think that parents, not only those who are in PMRC but other parents who are concerned here and across the country about the development of new trends in music and the lyrics that go along with that music, are naive or somehow missing the point? Do you think that they are unduly worried about some of these writings about sadomasochism, suicide, rape, and other things? Do you think that this is not really a serious problem for this country and our young people?

Mr. SNIDER. That is a sort of a multiple question. I do not think they are naive and I do not think that at times they are unduly worried. But I do think sometimes they take it overly serious.

Senator ROCKEFELLER. You know, many of the monster movies on all the time, they have been going on for ages, and people watch a monster movie and they get scared, and they walk away and it was just a movie. Rock and roll many times is the same thing, to try to get an effect of either laughter, sadness. A lot of the heavy metal bands are trying to scare people and just make them scared like a horror movie.

Vincent Price is not having problems because he has done all of these monster pictures. He is just an actor. I am not going to say I am just an actor, but I am entertaining people and a lot of these bands are entertaining people.

And when they were reading some of these lyrics before, I could not help but laugh. I mean, I had not heard some of them, but some of the lyrics were ridiculously ridiculous. I mean, a kid, even a kid reading that I think would go, oh my God, what is going on? It is ridiculous is the only word I can think of, some of the lyrics. Senator ROCKEFELLER. In the vehemence with which you attacked Senator Gore’s wife, I detected a defensiveness somehow on your part, a lack of assuredness on where you stand on this. Why did you feel it necessary to attribute some of the qualities to her that you did? Why was that important to your testimony?

Mr. SNIDER. First of all, I was not attacking Senator Gore’s wife. I was attacking a member of the PMRC.

Senator ROCKEFELLER. You were attacking Senator Gore’s wife by name.

Mr. SNIDER. Her name is Tipper Gore, is it not? I did not say the Senator’s wife. I said Tipper Gore.

Second, defensive. I have been working very hard. I believe in the music that I play. I believe we have a very bad reputation and I have been doing a lot on my part to try and say, hey, this is not a bad thing, this is fun, this is fantasy.

Kids are coming out, they are screaming, they are yelling, they are letting out their emotions, and they are going home, they are feeling better because they let out a lot of their frustrations.

As I said, I pride myself on writing lyrics that are not offensive and that are saying something positive. Most of our songs are about personal freedom. And when somebody tells me, after all I have done to fight against sexism, that I have a shirt with a spread-eagled woman——
Mr. Snider. No, it does not, because I know the reality of the record-buying market as a record buyer. With my allowance, I was able to, if I was lucky, afford maybe one album a week at the most. Usually it was one a month. Albums cost anywhere from $6 to $10, and that is a lot of money to a teenager, or to a pre-teenager it is a ridiculous sum.

And to a teenage kid that is a considerable amount of money. And so to listen to one record a week, I do not consider that a hardship.

Senator Rockefeller. Might I ask just one final question, Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman. Bearing in mind that it is 12:30 and we have a lot of witnesses left, yes.

Senator Rockefeller. I will bear that in mind and will not ask the question.

The Chairman. Senator Pressler.

Senator Pressler. Basically, I want to get down to your recommendations in terms of governmental action, either by this committee or by any Government body. You would recommend no governmental action in this area?

Mr. Snider. Absolutely.

Senator Pressler. What about industry actions? Would you recommend any type of voluntary labeling?

Mr. Snider. I do not feel that the industry—it has been expressed by many other people that each artist has an individual agreement. One of the big things is artistic freedom in your contract. I do not think the industry can pass a ruling on that.

Senator Pressler. And so your legislative recommendations, would that apply just to—not to broadcast? You would put broadcast and things that are over the airwaves in a different category than things people buy and show in their homes?

Mr. Snider. Well, I think we are talking about the purchase of albums and the lyrical content on the albums. That is what I am directing it to at this time.

Senator Pressler. So you would disagree with any action on those albums, be they by private industry or Government, any type of labeling?

Mr. Snider. If somebody would ask me what my opinion was, I had said earlier that I did not think there would be a problem for a parent and retail stores if they had taken the album home and found it dissatisfactory. I would like to believe that, but some retail stores will give you a hassle if you try to return an open album.

If you want a solution, maybe they could bring back—in the fifties, you could listen to an album in the store before you purchased the album. Most record stores play the albums in the store, and there is usually a stack of those album opened already that, if you want to go over and take a glance at the cover, which I have done many times myself, you could go over and do that.

So if you want to take some sort of industry action, I would think it would be to force the retail stores to allow people to return product that they are not satisfied with: satisfaction guaranteed.

Senator Pressler. Thank you very much.

The Chairman. Mr. Snider, thank you very much.

Mr. Snider. Thank you for your time.

[The material referred to follows:]