

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554

Office of Chairman
James H. Quello

March 29, 1993

Mrs. Terry Rakolta
Americans for Responsible
Television
P.O. Box 627
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303

Dear Ms. Rakolta,

Enclosed is a copy of my recent speech using your TV violence statistics. The speech received widespread press coverage warning broadcasters and Hollywood producers against excessive TV brutality and violence. The speech also contained the threat of government action. I believe this constituted an effective sequel to your A.R.T.'s well publicized announcement of a nationwide campaign against TV excesses two weeks earlier.

I'm sorry that you were initially disappointed and critical of the FCC's lack of direct authority to curb violence. You must now realize the FCC actually lacks enforcement authority -- this must be legislated by Congress.

However, you and your organization have generated a notable deterrent effect through your protests and your widely publicized campaign for legislation. Network executives have told me they are convening this spring to initiate joint efforts to curb violence. As you know, a distinguished Senator, Paul Simon, legislated a three year anti-trust exemption to permit the networks to meet for this purpose.

You and A.R.T. are to be commended for assuming an early leadership role in curbing TV depictions of brutality, violence, and rape, particularly at times accessible to children and young teens. I believe your public appearances and press announcements served as the national catalyst for sensitizing broadcasters, government officials and the public to the growing public outrage against TV and radio excesses in violence and indecency.

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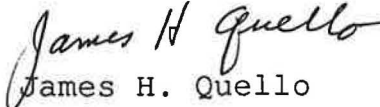
In my speech I mentioned that your campaign for legislative action has bothersome First Amendment implications. However, I supported your main thrust with my statement that was quoted in leading trade publications viz; "But if the First Amendment conflicts with outrageous programs that can be justifiably charged with violating the public interest, then the public interest must prevail. There may be some merit in legislating time constraints to protect children from brutality, murder, rape and smut similar to time constraints for indecency that have been upheld by court decision." I'm enclosing copies of articles in the latest Broadcasting & Cable magazine.

Not so incidentally, your organization's persistent protests in cooperation with complainant Al Westcott played the leading role in bringing to light the repeated egregious indecency violations of Howard Stern. Although your organization with several others may deem the sanctions as too lenient, the Stern fine is still the largest ever levied by the FCC.

So, even without legislation, you and your allied organizations with your leadership are making a noteworthy contribution to the American people in protecting children from TV and radio excesses.

Be assured the FCC is conscious of its public interest obligations in encouraging educational programs for children -- and, even more urgent, protecting children from outrageous violence and sexual smut.

Sincerely,


James H. Quello

Enclosures

cc: Chairman John D. Dingell
Chairman Edward Markey
Senator Paul Simon
Ms. Susan Kaplan