

WAR - Friend Only to the Undertaker

THE MUSIC BAG

The Mission Singers

Motown Records is a pretty close-knit group. When the Temptations recorded an album song called War and then made a single hit with Ball of Confusion, Motown got Edwin Starr to record the anti-combat tune and he made it big. That's a good example of idealism in practice: shooting for a Starr by avoiding Temptations.

The song itself, though, is a real example of idealism. The fact that it is being played on most top-40 stations is proof that this kind of idealism is not completely dead.

A person has either to approve or disapprove of War. There is no middle ground, no "no man's land" where you can abide and decide at your leisure. "War—what is it good for?" If your answer is different from the song's, you want no part of the song's message.

"War means tears in many thousands of mothers eyes when their sons go off to fight and lose their lives." Another songwriter once described war in a similar way: "When you read about the fighting, do you see the guns and planes? Well, all I see are people who are crippled, hurt and maimed."

Do those descriptions fully



EDWIN STARR

picture what war is? Certainly it's not true that war's only friend is the undertaker. Many businesses thrive on war. Bob Dylan once wrote a song about industrialists who become "Masters of War."

But no one would seriously try to justify war by saying it boosts a nation's economy. Many would say, though, that war is necessary for a nation's survival. "They say we must fight to keep our freedom."

It's too easy to get involved with theoretical debate about the merits—or lack of merits—of war. Such debate is worse than useless; it actually strengthens the attitude that

most people have concerning the societies they live in.

For isn't it true that most people consider war as an acceptable, inevitable, natural part of civilization? Doesn't the old bromide tell us that even nations have to blow off a little steam every once in a while? Don't we hear that if there was no war in Indochina, we'd find one somewhere else?

This attitude—that war is as natural in society as aggression is in the individual—is what brought up the "rage in the younger generation."

A song like War also looks to a day when war is the exception rather than the rule. It looks for a day when war is given its rightful name: murder.

Buffy Sainte-Marie once wrote a song called Universal Soldier that really pinpoints the responsibility of war. So far we've talked only about the "Masters of War" and the nations that always involve themselves in war. But in the end, it's the Universal Soldier who's to blame. It's the man that fights.

War will always be possible; war will always haunt us, just

War—what is it good for? Absolutely nothing!
War I despise.
It means the shortening of innocent lives.
War means tears in many thousands of mothers' eyes
When their sons go off to fight and lose their lives.

(Chorus):
War—what is it good for? Absolutely nothing!
It ain't nothing but a heart-breaker,
Friends only to the undertaker.

War is an enemy of all mankind,
The thought of war blows my mind.
War has caused the rage in the younger generation.
Induction and destruction; who wants to die?

War has shattered many young men's dreams.
Made them disabled, bitter and mean.
Life is too short and precious to fight a war these days.
War can't give life, it can only take it away.

Peace, love and understanding—tell me,
Is there no place for them today?
They say we must fight to keep our freedom,
But, Lord knows, there's got to be a better way.

(Published by Jobete, BMI)

as crime does. But if war is recognized for what it is, if people who fight are considered outlaws and criminals,

then we will find few combatants.

(Catholic Press Features)

As I See It

Much Ado About Little

By Pat Costa



I do not recall the pre-television era well enough to remember if sponsors' messages on radio were subjected to the same amount or kind of criticism that television commercials have received since they were first screened for the public.

I rather doubt that they were. In the first place I don't think we listened to radio as we watch television. It played a lesser role in our lives. Secondly, I am not sure but isn't it easier to tune out advertisements that are purely audio than those that belt both the eyes and the ears?

Whatever the case, I am certain of one thing—the sell was a lot softer in the forties than it is today.

How could you take umbrage at a rather glorious voice (that of opera star Beverly Sills who got her start this way) singing:

"Rinso white, Rinso blue, merry little washday song," or "Super Suds, Super Suds, lots more suds from super suds."

All this came to mind the other day as I was reading again about how members of the Women's Liberation Movement resent TV commercials calling them a "stereotyped and insulting picture of women."

Says one feminist, "They show the woman as a mindless boob and a masochistic slave—either a domestic servant or a sexy handmaiden."

An earlier article I had read reported some Libber calling attention to the Alka Seltzer ad that Alice Playten does about marshmallowed meatballs as a good example of an obvious insult to women.

As one who has often found fault with commercials, I think feminists are barking up the wrong tree. By taking the portrayal of women in these ads seriously they give them cre-

dence, a status the commercials don't deserve.

No one that I know identifies with those poor creatures of the ad men's imagination. Granted, there was a time when I attempted to ape the sophistication of Joan Crawford and Barbara Stanwyck, but in the words of Madison Avenue, I've come a long way, baby.

Any connection between those idiots in commercials and flesh-and-blood consumers has to be purely coincidental.

The best commercials are the funny ones. The Alka Seltzer ads contribute some of the best humor to television. The next best are those that we are supposed to take seriously but are so ridiculous that you get a good laugh anyway.

The dull, insipid offerings are not even strong enough to annoy which leaves the only villains (as far as I am concerned) the cigarette commercials, which may influence some dumb kid to take up the habit, and the cereal pushers.

Long before the nutrition experts came out with their pronouncement as to the nearly empty food value of many cereals, we had banned, as a measure of protest, those products pushed at our kids during morning cartoon shows.

Perhaps feminists should stop thinking of their own images and realize the influence Madison Avenue holds over their children. Now there's a project for them.

COMMUNICATIONS POST

Cleveland — (NC) — Father Joseph H. Kraker has been appointed diocesan director of the new Cleveland diocesan communications department. He will continue as assistant chancellor and director of the news bureau and head of the new department which will centralize all communication resources in the diocese.

Oberammergau

Anti-Semitic Charge Rejected

Oberammergau, West Germany — (RNS) — More than 90 per cent of those who attended performances of the famed Oberammergau Passion Play up to mid-July rejected the charge that the play is anti-Semitic, according to a survey compiled here.

In a poll of some 20,000 persons who viewed the 1970 edition of the play, better than 95 per cent stated that they had a "good impression" of the play and just under 90 per cent rejected the contention that the play needs "reform." Some said

God Comes First, Then Country, Says Dale Evans

Minneapolis — (RNS) — "To me, God is always first," said Dale Evans Rogers, wife of cowboy star Roy Rogers. "Then comes country."

Though the country can err, she said, it was built on Christian principles and therefore the flag "represents the lives given for the country and the good strong foundation we have."

"I get very, very angry inside when I see somebody stomp on the flag," she continued.

The radio, movie, and television star was here to attend the Christian Bookseller's convention. Her autobiographical "Woman at the Well" was published this spring.

Mrs. Rogers and her husband have been prominently identified with religious activities for many years. In 1954, Religious Heritage of America, Inc., named her Church Woman of the Year.

America has departed from Christian principles because the last generation failed to teach them to their children, Mrs. Rogers said in an interview here. "Lots of little children in the second World War didn't have their prayers read at mamas' knee because mama was too tired from working all day at the defense plant."

it should be shortened. It is more than seven hours long.

The survey was taken by the producers following each performance and keyed mainly to the question of anti-Semitism which has clouded the 1970 performances and admittedly cut attendance.

(The principal criticisms of the play have been registered by the American Jewish Committee, a U.S. human relations organization, and several U.S. Catholic and Protestant theologians. German newspapers have also been critical of the so-called anti-Jewish flavor of some aspects of the play.)

The four-point survey was conducted in English, French and German.

In the survey booklet, signed by the Oberammergau mayor Franz Zwink, playgoers were informed that the "community of Oberammergau" requested

an additional effort on their part to help put the anti-Semitic question in proper focus.

The producers have consistently denied that the play is anti-Semitic and have stated that anything which could be interpreted as "offensive" in the 1960 text had been deleted or revised.

The text of the script now contains a foreword stating that it was "God's inscrutable decision as to when, where and how the redemption of mankind was to take place through Jesus Christ" and that Jews should not be held to be a race of killers but "representatives of all mankind, who by their sins brought about the Lord's death."

The play normally draws a total audience of more than 500,000. Its organizers, because of cancellations and poor publicity, expect somewhat less than that figure.

Motion Picture Daily

Movie Nudity Is Out

New York — (NC) — Movie nudity, violence and obscenity are on the way out and good old family films on the way in, according to an editorial in Motion Picture Daily here.

The daily's editor and publisher, Martin Quigley Jr., reports "that the tide of obscenity, pornography, extreme violence and downright vulgarity on the screen" has reached the peak.

"From here on," Quigley comments, "there should be an overall improvement in film quality."

Warning that the transition to family fare will take time, Quigley gives theater owners the go-ahead to "look forward with keen anticipation to the day when they will not be ashamed to look any patron in the eye and not be apologetic when telling what business they are in."

Reason for the pending turn

to cleaner, quieter movies, according to Quigley, is the audience's overexposure to movie sex and violence.

He points to the box-office success of "Airport," a family film about airports, as an indication that people will go to see a movie even if it is inoffensive.

And he points to the commercial failure of Sweden's "I Am Curious—Blue" and the pending failure of the straight-from-the-novel-of-the-same-name "Myra Breckinridge" as proof that the public is blowing the whistle on sex-exploitation flicks.

"While it may take some time for exhibitors to get accustomed to holding their heads up again, they now can start practicing. It will be a grand feeling. It will mean the 'lost audience' will be coming back, insuring a bright future for the theatrical motion picture," Quigley said.