

opinion

Telephone sex services a touchy issue

by Maxwell Glen and Cody Shearer

WASHINGTON — Official Washington has recently devoted many hours to a matter of untold significance, and resolution may be imminent. Unfortunately, likely action by congress may only complicate a needed, if unseemly, debate on the issue.

That issue is best known as "phone sex." An entertainment form once favored mostly by readers of Hustler, the Village Voice and other "progressive" publications, listening to sexually-suggestive telephonic cooings has become something of a national pastime in the last year, drawing more customers in one day than the Cleveland Indians do in a season.

Secretaries do it. White House Aides do it. Not surprisingly, kids do it, too. And that's why an assortment of federal, state and local officials say they want to

curb the skin magazine publishers, independent services and telephone companies that are panting all the way to the bank.

Rep. Thomas J. Bliley Jr., of Virginia, is the main force behind congressional efforts to end America's affair with what he calls "dial-a-porn." A former funeral home owner and Richmond mayor who came to Washington on Ronald Reagan's coattails, Bliley first sensed trouble last winter when a constituent complained that her 10-year-old daughter had dialed into an orgy, in this case courtesy of High Society magazine.

After some inquiries around town, the pipe-smoking Bliley says, he was incensed to find that neither the Federal Communications Commission nor Justice Department had the courage to throw cold water on the hot new commodity. Later, he even wrote the president about his concern.

Bliley's remedy would subject phone

sex services to federal obscenity prohibitions. Like similar legislation introduced in the Senate, it would assess phone sex purveyors with a \$50,000 fine for every day of operation.

Yet the FCC has only begun its inquiry into the merits of phone sex. Its findings

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will be ready no earlier than next February. If the hear-no-evils in Congress can't abide by the delay, even time may not overcome the conflict between personal disgust with dirty talk and Supreme Court mandates on obscenity questions.

Phone sex has few antidotes in the Constitution. It's voluntary, for one, and therefore may deserve protection under rights of privacy and free speech. If people gladly subject themselves to groans a la phone, they don't merit federal protections designed for those who are subjected to abusive phone calls involuntarily.

Another hang-up lies in Supreme Court standards for obscenity. The court's Miller decision (1973) recognizes that what plays in New York may not play in Peoria, and therefore should be judged according to local standards. But neither justices nor lawmakers foresaw the case in which a compulsive 13-year-old in Salt Lake City might make 160 calls a month to a New York City number, as Bliley discovered last spring. On the other hand, as FCC lawyer Diane Silberstein points out, nor have they said clearly

whether an adult's access to pornography can be reduced under restrictions aimed

at children.

Yet common sense may be a structure here. The television started a season of programs that resemble "Father Knows Best" magazines traditionally suitable for parents' offices. Our is the sexual content that, though perhaps not a servative's liking, makes the turn-on sound par for the course attend to one while ignoring the seems kind of silly.

Of course, for those who've graduated from "Dial-a-Joke" to "Dial-a-Porn" there could be reward in the crackdown by Washington. For and collect-call charges, a large of services will gladly talk a anyone with a credit card number.

But in a country that changes enterprise, the best remedy may control, or none at all.



Marines full of questions

by Art Buchwald

The most important thing to do before you send men into combat is explain to them why you want them there.

I would hate to be the briefing officer on a Marine amphibious ship explaining to the troops why they are being sent into Beirut.

"All right, men, let's knock it off. I am here to explain your mission for the next few months. You are being sent into Beirut as a peacekeeping mission. Any questions?"

"Yes, sir. What's a peacekeeping mission?"

"It is a mission by which a neutral power stations troops in a volatile area to keep the various factions from killing each other until a government can become

strong enough to defend itself. Now you people will take up positions around Beirut airport down here on the low ground. Up here in the hills overlooking the airport are members of the Druze sect armed with heavy artillery, mortars and snipers. Over here are the Christian Phalangist militia, also heavily armed. The Christians are also in this part of Beirut next to the airport, and Moslem forces, not to be confused with the Druze, have control of this part of Beirut here. Intelligence also indicates there are 1,000 PLO troops who returned to the area since Israel pulled out of the city to this position down here. Is that clear?"

"Sir, are we supposed to keep the peace between all of them?"

"That's your mission. But you can only

do this by remaining in the Beirut airport area."

"If they all have the high ground and we have the low ground, how do we keep the peace?"

"You will not be alone. We have a large naval task force off the beaches that will cover you."

"Cover us from what?"

"Artillery and mortar fire from the hills, as well as snipers in the city. We now have the authority to use air power when you become a target of one of the dissident factions."

"You mean we're sitting ducks?"

"It means you will dig in as deep as you can until President Reagan, your Commander-in-Chief, can arrange a cease-fire between the Druze, the Christian Phalangists, the present Gemayel government army and the Syrians. Once this cease-fire is arranged and holds and a new government coalition of the various antagonists can be formed, you will be permitted to leave."

"Why are we called a peacekeeping force if we can't use our guns to keep the peace?"

"Because, since you are designated as such, the president has the authority to keep you there as long as he deems necessary. If you are sent in as a combat force, the War Powers Act has to be put into effect, and then Congress may dictate foreign policy. Technically, the U.S. Marines have been engaged in 'hostilities,' but the White House cannot admit that without giving up the president's executive powers. Is that clear?"

"No, sir."

"Good. We will continue. As a peacekeeping force your mission is not to take sides in a family dispute. What is going on now is that the Druze, Moslems and Christians are settling old scores that go back hundreds of years. They have committed atrocities against a table and forgot the past, we can bring peace to the Middle East."

"And if Washington can't, we get our butts shot off."

"I can assure you Washington has no intention of your getting your butts shot off. If we wanted to we could waste Lebanon in 10 minutes. Okay, you know all you need to do to what you mission is. Now remember, men, hold your fire. As a peacekeeping force you can't afford to get mad at anybody."

Noteboard defiled by Mad Scribbler

I am convinced someone on campus is out to get me.

I don't mean the maniacal bicyclists that try to impale me on their handle bars or the crazy pedestrians which I get bounced off of in a crowd. I don't even mean the insane motorists that take delight in trying to put tire tracks on my knee caps.

The person who is trying to wreck my peace of mind is the one and only Mad Scribbler.

The Mad Scribbler is the unidentified assailant who mysteriously attacks the noteboards on the doors in the dorms and scribbles all over them. Almost every morning I wake up to find my noteboard covered with strange sayings.

It all started one day when I came back from a football game.

Earlier I had written the usual "Beat the Hell outa Houston" on the board, but when I returned to my room the Mad Scribbler had added, "Beat the Hell outa me too...S&M. Hurt me. Hurt me."

What frightens me is that the Mad Scribbler attacks late at night and seemingly only on my door.

The reason the Mad Scribbler attacks my door can't be because it is an easy mark. I live in the middle of the hall on the fourth floor, and if he thinks climbing four floors is easy, he is crazy.

Besides being crazy, the Mad Scribbler must be desperate also. Late one night he wrote the same message on several doors in the hall.

"Hi (fill in the name of one of the occupants of the room). How ya doing? Give us a call. Mike and Chris, 260-XXXX."

The Scribbler does have some imagi-



nation and a small amount of... The worst thing that has been written on my noteboard is "gravy sucking... But that wounds me deeply. slurp my gravy."

If that isn't bad enough, in an attack, the Mad Scribbler outdid himself. He turned over my door marking of Opus, the penguin from Country comic strip, retaped the door and wrote "you always win wards."

I also think the Mad Scribbler decided to branch out into mysterious now. Last time he visited, he wrote "Well, well. It's about time." But for what?

Every door in the dorm hallway has a noteboard, but the Mad Scribbler has decided to harass only my noteboard continues to be defiled. I feel so used.

Campfire programs broaden their scope

by Children's Express United Press International

Children's Express, a privately funded news service, is real world journalism reported entirely by children 13 years of age or under whose tape-recorded interviews, discussions, reports and commentary are edited by teenagers and adults.

NEW YORK — By the time they're 16, one out of three kids today will be missing one parent because of divorce, separation or death. Or maybe both parents work. They're latchkey kids, which means they come home by themselves, take care of themselves and take care of their little sister or brother if they have them.

"The American family is changing, the needs of young people are changing and we have to change with them if we're going to be meaningful and relevant," Arnold Sherman said to Children's Express reporters. He is the National Executive Director for Campfire, Inc. Hearing the name, Campfire, we think of girls sitting around the camp roasting marshmallows. But times have changed.

Campfire has gone co-ed and they have expanded their programs. Not only is Campfire a club and camping organization, now they have "response" programs teaching kids about child and sexual abuse, youth employment, juvenile justice and other important issues.

"Kids home alone are vulnerable to lots of things that they don't know how to deal with," Sherman said. "Like somebody knocks on the door and it's a stranger — Campfire gives kids information about what to do. We teach them about what a good touch is and what a bad touch is."

We think it's a good idea. A lot of kids need a place to talk. In Campfire, like six

to eight children and a parent together in someone's house. It's a family-type setting. The kids are comfortable and they can learn what on, have a say in it and take part in it.

Five- or six-year-old Bluebonneters, boys and girls, do things as a team — like all the traditional programs. Let's say they're going to make for their parents' anniversary something. Let's say they want to know how to fix a car. Boys will learn to will learn.

"Almost all of our programs are so that handicapped kids can participate, too," Sherman added.

Slouch by Jim



"Think of all the... that taller goalposts... minute."

The Battalion

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