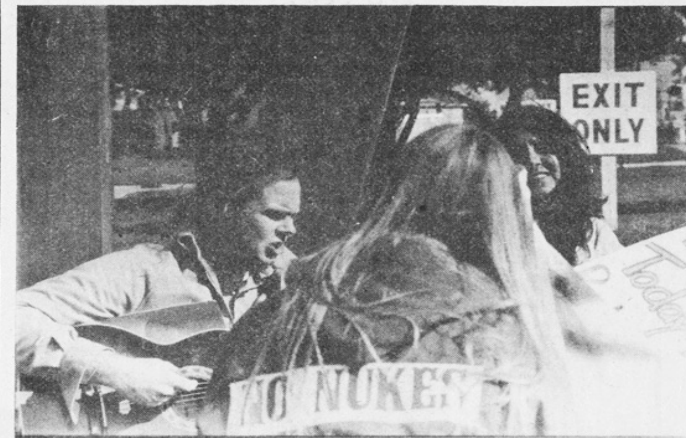


1978 - A year of protest in Mich.



WTAC



For: You reading "The VOICE"
From: All of us

"A WTAC editorial from Peter C. Cavanaugh, Vice-President and General Manager"

Hi! How are you? I'm fine, thanks. This particular page in **The VOICE** is actually a purchased advertisement for WTAC, but rather than run the usual laser burst lines and logos with pictures of funny looking cartoon folk or giant turkeys and stuff, I thought I would just run down a few quickies as though I was writing a letter or something and just, in a frenzy of uncontrolled stream consciousness, let it all hang out a little and leave everything exactly the way it comes out of my head without changing anything when I get done though it might look real stupid when I review what hath sprung forth. The reason I thought I'd try this approach is 'cause it's most probable readers of **The VOICE** are a little different than most and, as such, are probably sick and tired of the usual "ads" you see all over for radio stations and a lot of other entities as well. It's exactly 4:03 p.m., Thursday, March 30, and at precisely 5:00 p.m. this very day, Mr. Moore will make an appearance demanding immediate copy for his publication which I have promised without fail will be ready. Thus, let us wander for fifty-seven minutes and see just where we wind up.

WTAC is, of course, an A.M. "mass appeal" station with our roots in rock. In my own case, I started way back in 1957 as a part-time D.J. at WNDR in Syracuse, New York (my home town) which was the first facility to play "rock 'n roll" in the area. I was still in high school (Catholic Cathedral Academy) at the time and thought I was pretty hot stuff even though the little sisters at school all knew I'd lose my faith through exposure to such obvious occasions of sin as Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Chuck Berry. Incidentally, even one song by Mr. Berry on the radio back then was guaranteed to bring in five to ten calls complaining about "nigger music" and, once in a while, threats of life and limb. If you saw "American Hot Wax," I guess you've got a little idea of how weird it was. I found the movie unusually authentic. When I finished college (Jesuit, LeMoyné '63) Dan Berrigan used to give me "D's" in theology for mis-spelled words. Some liberal, huh? I came to Flint 'cause a good friend of mine, Bob Dell, another Syracusan (along with Dick Clark and Frank . Baum who wrote "The Wizard of Oz" series) had been heard on WNDR by a gentleman named Gene Milner who owned this radio station in Flint, Michigan called "WTAC".

Mr. Milner hired Mr. Dell who in turn hired Mr. Cavanaugh who started on "Big Six Hundred" in the spring of 1964 as the Beatles exploded. I still remember jammed phone lines at night for "Beatle books," and both Bob and I crashed their first ever Detroit appearance at Olympia with "official state police" badges we made up ourselves. Worked like a charm. Got backstage, interviewed all four, had our pictures taken, and were the only radio people in Michigan who got that close. Bob Dell is currently in New Orleans doing a morning show. Mr. Milner bought a station in Des Moines, Iowa (the world's largest retreat house) where I was sent as program director for several years and, upon returning to Flint, picked up the old night-time slot on "TAC" for a while. Then I went on mornings for around eight years

(as air personality and program director) and two years ago, when I was just too damn old to hack it anymore, the kind people who own WTAC currently (Fuqua Communications) decided to get me off the air at all cost and the only non-announcer job open was this one I still hold down. I have a big office with a funny looking rug and used to do daily editorials until last year when I decided that most people didn't know what the hell I was talking about most of the time and, frankly, once in a while, I didn't either. Also, I was a rock concert promoter for a number of years and ran those "Wild Wednesdays" at Sherwood Forest and those "Mt. Holly Dances" you might have heard about from old time rockers still hanging around. Most of our other people at WTAC have fairly similar histories and most of us here are also quite crazy in the finest sense of the word. Fred "Boogie" Brian, our program director is typical. Sporting long hair, blue jeans and tattered T-shirts, (three of four simultaneously on chillier days), Fred also drives either (A) his '72 Merc with 167,987 miles recorded (he's turned it back several times) or (B) his new '79 Lincoln Continental town car with every option known to man or mouse. He also is totally unaware of which vehicle he is occupying at any given time, choosing the machine parked closest to his apartment door as he begins his day and not worrying about it beyond this point.

WTAC, at this writing, is, of course, still "kicking it out" as we have through the years. We play lots of disco now because that seems to be what's coming down, but still feature lots of rock and other forms. Disco is, historically speaking, a type of "rock" itself (although purists, I'm sure, would voice radical negatives upon this observation) and, as such, shouldn't really be as put down in some circles as much as it is from time to time. Being an "A.M." station in an age when "F.M." has become hip presents us with quite a challenge. We have to be that much more together. We also, along with our regular format, feature such specials as "Rock Roots" on Sundays between 10 and noon which is nothing but vintage material along with old WTAC station jingles which sound so bad they're great and absolutely no commercials at all. The program is produced during the week by yours truly during lunch hour breaks as a form of executive therapy and, even though I never talk (making up for countless years of rapping all over the introductions of your favorite songs), I'm still "there" (like Hamlet's ghost). We also are delighted in running "Radio Free Flint" three times weekly on our station. "Radio Free Flint" is produced by a renegade band of local hippies who seem to have nothing better to do in life than put down society and laugh at a lot of things that others take seriously. Michael Moore, sort of a leader in this outfit, is certainly not the sort of person I'd care to take to a Consumers Power picnic. His hair is almost as long as Boogie's too.

Although you certainly don't have to, I'd like to wind up this thing (it's 5:02) with an invitation to check WTAC out whenever you get a chance. Also, feel free to let us know how you feel about what we're doing if you care to. Drop a line or just give us a buzz (call) should the mood hit. Our basic programming philosophy is the same as Einstein's. Everything is the present (or, if you Zepplin fans prefer "The Presence") and everything else is pure illusion. Including this diatribe.

Peter C. — editorially speaking